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CROSS CURRENTS

*A QUARTERLY REVIEW
to explore the implications
of Christianity for our times*

ARENDT	•	MARCEL	•	MOELLER
LUDMANN	•	ANTONELLI	•	BUZZARD

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EDITORS

Joseph L. Caulfield Sally S. Cunneen Alfred di Lascia

Eugene Fontinell Erwin Geissman

Assistant Editors: John F. Bannan John J. Figueroa James J. Greene

Contributing Editor: James Collins

Managing Editor: Joseph E. Cunneen

Subscription Address: 3805 Dovedale Court, Randallstown, Md.

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LIMITING WAR

ANTHONY BUZZARD

AS A VERY ordinary Churchman, who happens to have been closely connected with defense policy, I have often been struck by the gap which exists between Church opinion on this matter, and the policies evolved by the experts in Whitehall.

The reason for this gap is, I suppose, that the Church sets its sights on the ultimate ideal, with the result that it is sometimes accused of having its feet off the ground, whereas Whitehall is mainly concerned with what action is immediately practicable, and all too often assumes that moral considerations cannot apply when dealing with Communists and war.

That there is a demand for this gap to be filled is, I think, clear from the obvious confusion and disunity which exists among the Western public on what our policy should be regarding the H-Bomb and the limited use of nuclear weapons.

I will not attempt to suggest what should be done to help to bridge this gap from the side of Christian ethics.

Rear Admiral Sir Anthony Buzzard was Director of British Naval Intelligence, 1951-54. His article, based on an address given to the British Council of Churches at Leeds just before the end of last year, appeared in THE FRONTIER (a quarterly incorporating CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER and WORLD DOMINION, \$2 a year, 59 Bryanston St., Marble Arch, London W1, England), January 1958. CROSS CURRENTS hopes that this modest essay, along with the next contribution to this issue—Dr. Hannah Arendt's detailed analysis of post-Stalinist Russia—will be followed in succeeding numbers by a many-faceted consideration of international problems.

But I would like to propose four concrete steps which I feel should be taken nearer the realms of Whitehall. These, I believe, would not only help to close the gap, but would also help to clear the log jam which the world has got into in defence and disarmament. All these steps could, I believe, be taken now, without waiting for Communist agreement, and—with one minor exception—would be complementary to last summer's statement of the World Council of Churches, and to the latest Western disarmament proposals, for which we should, of course, continue to seek Communist agreement.

The first thing required is, I suggest, a set of moral or legal principles at which the pundits of Whitehall, Washington and other capitals should aim when framing their defence policies. These might take the form of a modernized version of the conditions for a 'just war.' I suggest that, in the first place, these should merely re-state principles rather than try to lay down hard and fast laws, to which agreement would at the moment be difficult. It seems to me, too, that they might be better drawn up and proclaimed by international jurists than by the Church, but I feel sure the Church should lead the appeal for this task to be done.

I presume that such principles would run something like this:

Fighting can only be legally justified if the cause is a really just one, such as defence against blatant aggression, or the removal of some intolerable basic injustice. It can only be justified if all other means of removing that cause have been tried first to the limit. In carrying out that fighting, only the minimum force necessary must be used. Every opportunity must be kept open for the earliest possible

cease-fire and return to negotiations based upon the withdrawal of the original injustice. The destruction wrought must be limited so as never to become disproportionate to the issue at stake. The weapons used must always be reasonably controlled, and reasonably discriminate, as between armed forces and civilians, and as between combatants and neutrals.

That, I suggest, should be done, in the first place, unilaterally, by the international jurists of the Western Powers: the Communists and the uncommitted countries would then be invited to say whether, or not, they were in agreement.

Having thus, so to speak, regained our sense of direction, the second requirement seems to me to be to stop the present vicious circle in the arms race, in which mutual fear is countered by arms, which is countered by more fear, and then more arms. And the key to this lies, I suggest, in an honest appraisal of the balance of power, which I think is generally accepted as being our best hope for peace until a World Government and Police Force can be achieved.

Now I believe it to be an unquestionable military fact, that, despite Russia's recent success with her rockets and *sputniks*, America has, at the moment, not a balance but a great superiority over Russia in a total global war capability.

This is because, as yet, she possesses more nuclear weapons, better techniques in delivering air attacks, and, above all, a tremendous geographical advantage. Even though Russia may well catch up in weapons and techniques, this inherent factor of geography will always enable the Americans to deliver weapons from bases three times as close to Russian vitals as Russian bases can in general be to American vitals.

Moreover, quite apart from these relative considerations, the power of these weapons is now becoming so great that

the saturation point will soon be reached, at which relative factors no longer have any significance. After that the mere existence of a certain number of these weapons on each side will be sufficient to make total war utterly repugnant to both.

I suggest, therefore, that the West in general, and the Americans in particular, can well afford to state that we are no longer interested in a neck and neck race in total war weapons, but only intend to maintain sufficient of these to ensure that any potential opponent will always do his utmost to avoid total war. In other words, we should openly accept the stalemate or balance of power in terms of total war weapons.

We might even go further, and renounce unilaterally our intention of ever fighting total global war through to a finish, if such a war should ever occur. For such a disaster could never be in proportion to any issue at stake; it could never be the lesser of two evils, since it would virtually mean the destruction of the human race.

Now whilst we would still maintain sufficient power to keep such a war pointless for the Communists, this relaxation would, moreover, enable us to begin to make economies, not only in total war weapons, but also in the many other preparations which are only required for fighting total global war through to a finish. The urgent need for these economies will be apparent in a moment.

The third step which we should take concerns the balance of power in regard to *local limited war*. In this, by contrast with the global balance, the Communists at present enjoy great superiority, on account of their inherent strength in conventional forces. This is due not only to their vast reserves of manpower and their low standards of living and dying, but also to such inherent factors as the internal lines of communication with which geography blesses them, and to

the initiative which they hold, as dictators and potential aggressors, enabling them to mobilize and redeploy their forces much more quickly and secretly than the West can.

Consequently, if there is to be a local balance of power, we are in the terrible position of having, in *some* cases, to initiate at least limited atomic war, in retaliation for serious local aggression by conventional forces—not in all cases, but in some. This is a fundamental factor from which we are unable to escape, at least until disarmament has gone a very long way.¹

Another fundamental factor is that, in these particular cases, we are more able to deter or repel a serious conventional aggression in terms of limited atomic war than with conventional forces only. This would be true even though the Communists would, of course, retaliate in kind and even when they have caught up with Americans in limited atomic weapons. Limited atomic war always favours the defender of territory more than the attacker; it enables a given front to be defended with far fewer forces; and it enables effective retaliation to be much swifter and this makes a rapid *fait accompli* by the aggressor much more difficult. Moreover, it makes aggression much more unprofitable politically, for it forces upon him the terrible choice of either allowing us to get in the crucial first blow with atomic weapons, or of initiating the aggression with such weapons himself, which, for a local limited issue, is likely to do the overall Communist cause much more harm than good.

Now all this is, of course, a most disagreeable situation for us, too. But the

American and British governments have already committed themselves to a policy of limited atomic war for the more serious local conflicts. The question is whether such war can be kept within limits. And you will rightly want to know whether limited atomic war can be sufficiently limited to be in proportion to the issues likely to be at stake; whether it can be reasonably controlled and discriminate, and whether it can be sufficiently distinguished from total global war to prevent its spreading to that. Here we move from facts to opinions.

At the moment, most people—particularly the public—believe that such limitations and distinctions will never be practicable, though very few have seriously tried to work them out. If this view is right, then clearly the West must give up its present preparations for fighting limited atomic war, and spend its precious resources to better effect. But what are the alternatives for dealing with serious local aggression? Either the “all or nothing” threat of total war, or many more conventional forces (inadequate as these would still be in a number of cases), or passive resistance, for which there is, surely, virtually no prospect of the Western governments taking responsibility. Any of these alternatives would mean abandoning the local balance of power and admitting that we cannot deal with Communism without threatening genocide.

Other people—particularly some Service authorities—say that they cannot afford to have their hands tied in advance by any indication of the sort of limitations we might adopt. This school of thought implies that “it will all be all right on the night,” and maintains that there is nothing more to it than applying, when the time comes, the old military principle of economy of force.

Now, it seems to some of us that the truth lies between these two extremes.

¹ It is just possible that the limited use of chemical (i.e., gas) weapons might counter-balance Communist superiority in conventional forces, but these would take some time to provide, and would involve denunciation of the relevant Geneva convention.

That is to say, that the necessary limitations are not so difficult as to be incapable of being made practicable, and not so easy as to be safe to leave until the eleventh hour. For, after examining the limitations in some detail, we feel that they can be made practical, but will require much preparation, and considerable modifications to present military practice. The geographical area of hostilities would, of course, have to be limited. The weapons used would have to be strictly limited in their size and radioactive fall-out. The targets attacked would also have to be strictly limited, particularly as regards keeping off "centres of population." And, above all, we should have to limit strictly the war aims which we try to impose as a condition for a "cease fire." In this lies the key to the whole problem. We must give up all ideas of unconditional surrender, or indeed of victory as such, and only aim to a return to negotiations on the basis of the minimum condition required to remove the original injustice.

If these limitations are worked out and ventilated in general terms, so that the world may be conditioned to them well beforehand, then we feel they would stand a good chance of being effective as a local deterrent, and of holding good if a serious local war should break out despite that deterrent. And the reason is, of course, that whatever they may say in their propaganda beforehand, the Communists would be desperately anxious to conform to any reasonable limitations we adopt. It would be as much in their self-interest to do so as it would be in ours. Both sides are disciplined by the over-riding mutual terror of total global war.

What, therefore, is urgently required in order to restore the local balance of power, is to convince the world that limited atomic war can be limited, that it need not spread to total war. This, fortunately, Mr. Dulles has at last begun

to do, in a recent article in the October edition of *FOREIGN AFFAIRS*. He has been strongly supported by Mr. Lester B. Pearson in a recent address to the "World Affairs" council. But, as yet, N.A.T.O. policy does not seem to have begun to move in that direction, and in this country the recent White Paper and subsequent Government statements have left the country in disunity and confusion on this point.

In my fourth and final proposal, I must ask you to face one more disagreeable fact. In one area—the German or Central Front in Western Europe—it is considered to be militarily impracticable at present to stop an all-out local Communist aggression, even with limited atomic weapons. To maintain the local balance of power in this area, it is, therefore, at present considered necessary to retain the right to initiate the use of total war weapons, at least in some degree.

Now, although such a major local aggression is extremely unlikely, as a deliberate initial act, the threat might well arise, unintentionally, as a consequence of some smaller conflict.

To tolerate any longer than absolutely necessary this situation, in which we have to be the first to use the H-Bomb, is utterly repugnant by any moral or legal standards. Nor is it expedient, if we want to deal with Communism without destroying all, and if we want to negotiate the reunification of Germany from a position of realistic power balance.

To escape from this dilemma requires two things. First, the transfer of economic resources, now wasted on over-developed preparations for global war, to the building up of effective local forces in Germany. This would be achieved by the proposal (already discussed) to ease the race in total war weapons, and to stop preparing to fight such a war through to a finish.

Secondly, the Western public must see that the building of forces in Germany offers an escape from the threat of genocide. This task seems utterly futile, while we offer nothing but total war for any serious conflict in that area. But it would be made possible by the third proposal, i.e., the proposal to distinguish limited atomic war from total war. That alone can make preparations for limited atomic war seem worthwhile.

Unfortunately our recent White Paper set a bad example in both these respects. The damage done thereby can only be repaired if the Western Governments as a whole frankly show their public (and indeed the Communists) the difficulty that we are in in Germany, and state that we are determined to escape from it by restoring the local balance of power there, as elsewhere.

Let me summarize my proposals like this:

First, the international jurists of the West should be pressed to restate the legal principles of the "just war," as a target at which the policy-makers should aim.

Secondly, the West should try to ease the arms race in total war weapons, by openly accepting the global balance of power, and stating that we only intend to keep enough of these weapons to make total global war thoroughly repugnant. We should say that we no longer intend to fight such a war through to a finish, or to spend resources on preparations for it.

Thirdly, the West should take the first essential step towards restoring the local balance of power by explaining publicly why we consider limited atomic war and total global war to be two quite different things, why we might have to initiate the former, and why we consider it could be strictly limited and need not spread to total war. If we are *not* prepared to do this, we should give up preparations for limited atomic war and put our money into much stronger and more mobile conventional forces—

supported perhaps by chemical weapons.

Fourthly, the West should openly resolve to complete the restoration of the local balance of power by continuing to build up its strength in Germany—both limited atomic and conventional—in order to escape from having to be the first to use the H-Bomb.

Apart from the first proposal, concerning the principles of the just war, the key to the rest lies in the distinction between limited atomic war and total war—and this must come first. For until that distinction has been made it is impossible to relax the race in total war weapons.

Together, these proposals should provide the workable balance of power which must surely help equitable disarmament, as well as peace. They would, moreover, begin to introduce moderation, control and the rule of law, enforced by a healthy mutual fear of total war, until disarmament or a world police force can come to our rescue.

All this should be carried out as well as—not instead of—the present efforts being made to reach agreement on disarmament, save in one respect. Instead of pressing for the cessation of all nuclear testing and production, we should press only, at this stage, to stop the testing and production of total war weapons, since it is clearly vital to the whole concept of deterring and limiting war that limited atomic weapons shall be developed until they are as small and as clean—and therefore discriminate—as the scientists can make them.

I submit that these four modest steps may prove acceptable to Whitehall and Washington. Indeed, support has been growing for some of them recently. I suggest, however, that nothing more ambitious than these will be accepted at the moment. I maintain that nothing less will meet the present urgent situation, where time is not on our side.

(Continued on page 128)

TOTALITARIAN IMPERIALISM

HANNAH ARENDT

As I WRITE THIS, one year has passed since the flames of the Hungarian revolution illuminated the immense landscape of post-war totalitarianism for twelve long days. This was a true event whose stature will not depend upon victory or defeat; its greatness is secure in the tragedy it enacted. For who can forget the silent procession of black-clad women in the streets of Russian-occupied Budapest, mourning their dead in public, the last political gesture of the revolution? And who can doubt the solidarity of this remembrance when one year after the revolution the defeated and terrorized people have still enough strength of action left to commemorate once more in public the death of their

freedom by shunning spontaneously and unanimously all places of public entertainment, theatres, movies, coffee houses and restaurants?

The context of circumstances within which the revolution happened was of great significance, but it was not compelling enough to release one of those automatic processes that seem almost always to imprison history and which actually are not even historical, if we understand by historical whatever is worthy of being remembered. What happened in Hungary happened nowhere else, and the twelve days of the revolution contained more history than the twelve years since the Red Army had "liberated" the country from Nazi domination.

For twelve years everything had happened according to expectations—the long dreary story of deceit and broken promises, of hopes against hope and final disillusionment: from the first stage of popular front tactics and a sham parliamentary system, to open establishment of a one-party dictatorship which quickly liquidated the leaders and members of the formerly tolerated parties, until the next stage when the native communist leaders, whom Moscow rightly or wrongly mistrusted, were no less brutally framed, humiliated in show trials, tortured and killed while power passed into the hands of the most despicable and most corrupt elements among the Moscow-trained communists. All this and much more was predictable, not because there were any social or historical forces pressing in one direction, but because this was the automatic result of Russian hegemony. It was as though the Russian rulers repeated in great haste all the stages of the October

Dr. Hannah Arendt is widely known for her outstanding study of THE ORIGINS OF TOTALITARIANISM (Harcourt Brace, 1951). Meridian Books will bring out a paper edition of this book, including the essay we are presenting in CROSS CURRENTS, later this year.

For a number of years she served as executive secretary to the Committee on Jewish Cultural Reconstruction. A frequent contributor to PARTISAN REVIEW, THE REVIEW OF POLITICS and other distinguished journals, she is also the author of DER LIEBESBEGRIFF BEI AUGUSTIN. Her 1956 Walgreen lectures at the University of Chicago will be published under the title VITA ACTIVA.

This acute and thoughtful study of post-Stalinist Russia, seen in the light of the Hungarian revolution, appeared in THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS (Dept. of Political Science, University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla., \$5 a year), February 1958.

revolution up to the emergence of totalitarian dictatorship; the story, therefore, while unspeakably terrible, is without much interest of its own and varies very little; what happened in one satellite country happened at almost the same moment in all others from the Baltic Sea down to the Adriatic.

The only exceptions to this rule were the Baltic States on the one hand, and Eastern Germany on the other. The former were unhappy enough to be directly incorporated into the Soviet Union, with the consequence that the ceremonious repetition of the whole development had to be dispensed with and their status immediately assimilated to that enjoyed by other Soviet nationalities. When up to fifty per cent of the population was deported and the loss made good by forced random immigration, it became clear that they had been assimilated to the status of the Tartars, the Kalmyks or the Volga Germans, that is, to those who had been found untrustworthy during the war against Hitler. The case of Eastern Germany is an exception in the opposite direction. It never became even a satellite country but remained occupied territory with a Quisling government despite the zeal of German Moscow agents, with the result that the country, though still miserable enough when compared with the *Bundesrepublik*, fared much better economically as well as politically than the satellites. But these regions are exceptions only because they, too, fall into the orbit of Russian power; they are not exceptions to the satellite system because they did not belong to it.

Not even the difficulties which began shortly after Stalin's death can be called unexpected, because they reflected so faithfully the difficulties, or rather the controversies, within the top Russian leadership. Here, too, there seemed to be a repetition of conditions in the

Twenties, before the streamlining of the international communist movement into its eventual totalitarian shape had been completed, when every Communist Party split into factions which faithfully mirrored the faction-ridden Russian party and each splinter looked up to its respective Russian protector as to a patron saint—which indeed he was since the destinies of his protégés all over the world depended utterly upon his own fate. It certainly was interesting, and gave food for thought about certain unchanging structures of this movement, that Stalin's death was not only followed by the same succession crisis as Lenin's thirty years ago (which, after all, in the absence of any law of succession is rather a matter of course), but that the crisis was met again by the temporary solution of "collective leadership," a term coined by Stalin in 1925, and that the result in the Communist Parties abroad was again a desperate struggle to line up with one of the leaders and form a faction around him. Thus, Kadar is as much a protégé of Khrushchev as Nagy was a protégé of Malenkov. Even in the atmosphere of stark and sometimes sublime tragedy which the Hungarian revolution created, this repetitiveness frequently bordered upon the comical, as when one of the last broadcasts of the communist Free Radio Rajk from Hungary urged "the comrades to join the pseudo-Communist Party of Kadar" and turn in into a "true Hungarian Communist Party." For in the same vein the early opposition to Stalin had urged the comrades not to leave the party but to use the Trojan-horse tactic, until Stalin himself ordered the same tactics for the German Communists with respect to the Nazi movement. Each time the result was the same: the joiners became true and good Stalinists and Nazis for all practical purposes.

The Hungarian revolution interrupt-

ed these types of automatic occurrences and conscious or unconscious repetitions just when the student of totalitarianism had grown accustomed to them, and public opinion apathetic. This event was not prepared at all by developments in Poland. It was totally unexpected and took everybody by surprise—those who did and suffered, no less than those who watched in furious impotence from the outside, or those in Moscow who prepared to invade and conquer the country like enemy territory.¹ For what happened here was something in which nobody any longer believed, if they ever had believed in it—neither the communists nor the anti-communists, and least of all those who, either without knowing or without caring about the price other people would have to pay, were talking about possibilities and duties of people to rebel against totalitarian terror. If there was ever such a thing as Rosa Luxemburg's "spontaneous revolution"—this sudden uprising of an oppressed people for the sake of freedom and hardly anything else, without the demoralizing chaos of military defeat preceding it, without coup d'état techniques, without a closely knit apparatus of organizers and conspirators, without the undermining propaganda of a revolutionary party, something, that is, which everybody, conservatives and liberals, radicals and revolutionists, had discarded as a noble dream—then we had the privilege to witness it. Perhaps the Hun-

garian professor was right when he told the United Nations Commission: "It was unique in history, that the Hungarian revolution had no leaders. It was not organized; it was not centrally directed. The will for freedom was the moving force in every action."

Events, past and present—not social forces and historical trends, nor questionnaires and motivation research, nor any other gadgets in the arsenal of the social sciences—are the true, the only reliable teachers of political scientists, as they are the most trustworthy source of information for those engaged in politics. Once such an event as the spontaneous uprising in Hungary has happened, every policy, theory and forecast of future potentialities needs re-examination. In its light we must check and enlarge our understanding of the totalitarian form of government as well as of the nature of the totalitarian version of imperialism.

I. RUSSIA AFTER STALIN'S DEATH

Spontaneous as the Hungarian revolution was, it cannot be understood outside the context of developments after Stalin's death. As we know today, this occurred on the eve of a gigantic new purge, so that whether he died a natural death or was killed, the atmosphere in the party's higher echelons must have been one of intense fear. Since no successor existed, no one appointed by Stalin and no one quick enough or who felt up to the task, a struggle for succession among the top leadership followed immediately and caused the crisis in Soviet Russia and the satellite countries. Its outcome even now, five years after the death of Stalin, may not yet be decided. But one thing is sure: one of the most serious flaws in totalitarian dictatorship is its apparent inability to find a solution to this problem.

The attitude of totalitarian dictators

¹ Boris I. Nicolaevsky, whose "Battle in the Kremlin"—a series of six articles published by *The New Leader*, XL (July 29–September 2, 1957)—is the most comprehensive and the soundest analysis of developments in Russia after Stalin's death, finds "that the United Nations' report on the Hungarian Revolution has established that the outbreak of violence in Budapest was the result of *deliberate provocation*." I am not convinced; but even if he is right, the result of the Russian provocation was certainly unexpected and went far beyond the original intentions.

in this matter we knew before: Stalin's carelessness in occasionally appointing his successor only to kill or demote him a few years later was matched and supplemented by a few scattered remarks of Hitler on the subject; everything we knew suggested strongly that they were convinced that the question was of minor importance because almost anybody would do as long as the apparatus remained intact. To understand this carelessness, one must bear in mind that the choice obviously was limited to a small circle of people who by the very fact that they were on top *and* alive had proven their superiority under totalitarian conditions, with everything that such superiority implies. From the totalitarian viewpoint, moreover, a binding regulation of succession would introduce an element of stability, alien to and possibly in the way of the needs of the "movement" and its extreme flexibility. If a succession law existed, it would indeed be the only stable, unalterable law in the whole structure and therefore possibly a first step in the direction of some kind of legality.

However that may be and whatever we may have known, we could not possibly know what would happen in the case of the dictator's death. We know now that succession is an unsolved problem and causes a serious crisis in which the relations among the potential successors themselves, between them and the masses, and the relationship among the various apparatuses on whose support they can count are involved. Totalitarian leaders, being mass leaders, need popularity, which is no less effective if, under totalitarian conditions, it is fabricated by propaganda and supported by terror. The first stage in the succession struggle was a competition for popularity, because none of the competitors was well known, let alone popular—with the exception, perhaps, of

Zhukov, who, being an army man, was the least likely to succeed in rising to power. Khrushchev borrowed tested American devices, travelled around, shook hands and even learned how to kiss babies. Beria engaged in an anti-war, appeasement policy whose very extremes were oddly reminiscent of Himmler's efforts during the last months of the war to succeed Hitler by becoming the man the Allied powers would trust enough to conclude peace with. Malenkov preached a greater emphasis on consumer goods and promised to raise the standard of living. All of them eventually liquidated Beria, not only because his foreign policy had become dangerous but also because he was of course the very symbol of popular hatred in Russia as well as abroad—which, again as in the case of Himmler, apparently everybody knew except himself.

This competition for mass popularity should not be mistaken for a genuine fear of the masses. Fear, to be sure, was a potent motive for the establishment of the collective leadership but unlike the triumvirate after Lenin's death, which was indeed a mutual security pact against the "counter-revolution," the collective leadership after Stalin's death was a mutual security pact of the concerned gentlemen against each other. And anyone who troubles to look up their past—all of them staunch Stalinists, educated and tested only in the Stalin era—will have to admit that their fear of each other was entirely justified.

Fear of the masses, on the other hand, would hardly have been justified. At the moment of Stalin's death, the police apparatus was still intact, and even now, when the police empire has been broken up and the terror loosened for years, there is some evidence of boomerang effects from the unrest in the satellite countries—a few student disturbances, one strike in a Moscow plant,

some very cautious demands for more leeway in "self-criticism," though hardly any demands for freedom among the intellectuals²—but there has never been any evidence of open revolt or of the regime's being afraid of it. Moreover, the little show of opposition among intellectuals was highly encouraged from above, and such an encouragement, far from being a genuine concession, was one of Stalin's tested devices of domination. Appeals for "self-criticism" have served for decades as deliberate provocation by which to bring opponents into the open and test public opinion, whereupon the situation is dealt with appropriately. As far as Russia proper is concerned, Khrushchev's recent speech informing the intellectuals that they had indulged in "incorrect understanding of the essence of the party's criticism of the Stalin personality cult," underestimated "the positive role of Stalin" and should go back to "Socialist realism . . . [with its] unlimited opportunities" in developing "their talents to glorify," is not much more than a routine performance.

Another aspect of the same speech is more interesting. For in it Khrushchev announces the establishment of "creative unions" through which "the creative growth of every writer, artist, sculptor, etc." would be subject "to constant comradely concern." Here we find a clue to how he intends to replace the restriction of police terror and to the meaning of his insistence on decentralization. He seems to plan a surveillance exerted not only by an outside (police) body but recruited from the midst of the people,

in this case the writers and artists themselves. This would be institutionalization of, possibly an improvement upon, the mutual spying principle which permeates totalitarian societies, whose effectiveness Stalin had achieved by making information and denunciation of others the only test of loyalty. It is noteworthy that another recently announced innovation of Soviet rule points in the same direction. This is the new decree about "social parasites," who will also be selected for punishment in concentration camps by the populace itself. It is a kind of highly organized mob rule with which Khrushchev proposes to replace certain functions of the secret police, as though the people by now can be trusted to be their own policemen and to take the initiative in the selection of victims.

Similar new developments in the techniques of domination can be discovered in the much discussed decentralization projects. For, far from indicating a democratization of Soviet society or a rationalization of Soviet economy, they are obviously aimed at breaking the power of the managerial class through the establishment of new economic regions with new men to run them.³ The re-deployment of Moscow-centralized personnel to the provinces will assure their atomization, while from now on they will be subject to the surveillance of local party authorities, who surely will not fail to exert the same "constant comradely concern with the creative growth" of every plant and every branch

² Those who harbor illusions in this matter should read the exchange of letters between Ivan Anissimov, editor of the Soviet magazine *Foreign Literature*, and Ignazio Silone, which took place during the last months of 1956 and has been published by *Tempo Presente* in Italy and *The New Leader*, XL (July 15, 1957), under the title "A Troubled Dialogue."

³ Nicolaevsky, *loc. cit.*, brings valuable material for "Khrushchev's fight against the Soviet managerial class . . . [which] goes far back into the past." Compare also the article by Richard Lowenthal in *Problems of Communism*, September-October, 1957, "New Purge in the Kremlin," which comes to the conclusion: "What had started as a drive for more economic rationality has turned into a drive for more direct party rule in the economic field."

of production. This aim is not new; Khrushchev learned from Stalin that every group of people who begin to show signs of class identity and solidarity must be broken up, ideologically for the sake of the classless society and practically for the sake of an atomized society which alone can be totally dominated.⁴ But what Stalin achieved by means of a permanent revolution and periodic gigantic purges, Khrushchev hopes to achieve by new devices, built into, so to speak, the social structure itself and meant to assure atomization from within.

This difference in method and approach is important enough, especially as it is not restricted to the period of the "thaw." It was quite striking, though it has been hardly noticed, that the bloody crushing of the Hungarian revolution, terrible and effective as it was, did not represent a typically Stalinist solution. Stalin most probably would have preferred a police action to a military operation, and he would certainly have carried it through, not merely by execution of leaders and imprisonment of thousands, but by wholesale deportation and by consciously depopulating the country. Nothing finally would have been further from his mind than to send enough aid to prevent a complete collapse of the Hungarian economy and to stave off mass starvation, as the So-

viet Union has done during the last year.

It may be too early to tell how permanent this change in methods will turn out to be. It may be a temporary phenomenon, a hangover, as it were, from the time of collective leadership, of unsolved conflicts within the inner circle of the regime with the concomitant relaxation of terror and ideological rigidity. Moreover, these methods are as yet untried and their effects could be quite different from those expected. Yet, as it is certain that the relative relaxation of the post-Stalin era was not caused by pressure from below, it seems plausible that certain objective factors strongly favor an abandonment of some features and devices which we have come to identify with totalitarian rule.

First among them is the fact that the Soviet Union for the first time suffers from a very real shortage of labor. In this situation, chiefly due to severe losses during the war but also to the country's progressing industrialization, the institution of slave labor, concentration—and extermination—camps which, among their other functions, also had to solve the acute unemployment problem of the thirties, caused partly by the enforced collectivization of the peasants, are not only obsolete but positively dangerous. It is quite possible that the younger generation objected to Stalin's plans for a new super-purge not only on the grounds of personal security, but because they felt that Russia was no longer in a position to afford the prohibitively high cost in "human material" involved. This seems to be the most plausible explanation of why the liquidation of Beria and his clique was followed by an apparently serious and successful liquidation of the police slave-empire, the transformation of some camps into forced settlements, and the release of a number of inmates.

⁴ Milovan Djilas, like many former communists, is less outraged by the loss of freedom under a communist dictatorship than by the loss of equality. High salaries, the possession of mink coats, automobiles and villas by the ruling bureaucracy must of course be very annoying to those who joined the movement for the sake of social justice. But they are not the sign of a "new class." If, on the other hand, it should be true that such a new class is forming in Yugoslavia, this alone would demonstrate that Tito's dictatorship is not totalitarian, which, indeed, it is not. See Djilas' *The New Class* (New York, 1957).

A second factor, closely connected with the first, is the emergence of Communist China, which because of its threefold superiority in population—600 against 200 million—puts Russia at a serious disadvantage in the half-hidden, but very real struggle for ultimate supremacy. Even more important, China, its adherence to the Soviet bloc notwithstanding, has thus far refused to follow the Russian depopulation policy; for great as the number of victims in the first years of dictatorial rule may appear—15 million seems a plausible guess—it is insignificant in proportion to the population when compared with the losses Stalin used to inflict on his subjects.⁵ These considerations of sheer numerical force, while they do not preclude the establishment of a police state or necessitate the abolition of rule through terror, definitely stand in the way of the type of mass liquidation of “innocents” or “objective enemies” which was so highly characteristic of both the Hitler and Stalin regimes.

These factors seem to impel Russia herself to the inner-communist heresy of national communism which obviously has become the ruling regime in Yugoslavia and in China. It is not surprising that communists of smaller countries like Gomulka, Rajk and Nagy, and Tito himself, should incline to this deviation. Communists who were more than simple agents of Moscow, willing to become ruling bureaucrats anywhere in the world when, for some higher reason

of world revolutionary strategy, the country of their birth should cease to exist, had no other choice. The case is different in China, which could have afforded the price of totalitarian terror even more easily than Russia. The fact, however, is that Mao has deliberately chosen the national alternative and formulated a number of theories in his recent speech which are in accordance with it and in flagrant contradiction to the official Russian ideology. No doubt, the text of “On the Correct Handling of Contradictions among the People” constitutes the first piece of serious writing which has come out of the communist orbit since Lenin’s death,⁶ and with it the ideological initiative has shifted from Moscow to Peiping. This, it is true, may harbor momentous consequences in the future; it may even change the totalitarian nature of the Russian regime. But at this moment all such hopes are, to say the least, premature. By now Zhukov’s demotion should have convinced those who had any doubts in this matter, for one reason for his dismissal is certainly that he was guilty of “nationalist deviations,” that, in other words, he started to speak about the “Soviet people” in much the same sense in which Mao tries to reintroduce *le peuple*, word and concept, into com-

⁵ The best proof of the difference between Mao’s and Stalin’s rule may be found in a comparison of the population censuses in China and Russia. The last Chinese census, counting close to 600 million people, was higher than statistical expectations, while Russian censuses for decades have been considerably lower than what statistically was expected. In the absence of reliable figures for population losses through extermination, one could guess the figure of those who were murdered in Russia from these millions of people who were “statistically lost.”

⁶ The complete text of this important speech was published by *The New Leader*, XL (September 9, 1957; Section 2), in a supplementary pamphlet with a valuable commentary by G. F. Hudson. Reading the speech, one quickly realizes that the usual title “Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom” is quite misleading. The chief new theoretical elements are the recognition of contradictions between classes, on the one hand, and between the people and the government on the other, even under a Communist dictatorship. Of even greater importance is the strong populist note in the speech. On the matter of freedom, on the other hand, Mao is quite orthodox. Freedom to him is a means to an end as is democracy; both “are relative, not absolute, they come into being and develop under specific historical circumstances.”

munist ideology. Still, it may be that fear of Chinese competition constituted an important factor in the liquidation of the police empire, and in this case it would indeed be more than a mere maneuver or temporary concession; but in view of the fact that no similar change in ideology has taken place, so that the ultimate goal of world domination through war and revolution has remained unchanged, it is considerably less than a strategic change. It is a tactical retreat, and there are indications that Khrushchev quite deliberately has left the door wide open for the re-establishment of full-fledged terror as well as the recurrence of super-purges.

One of these indications I have mentioned already. It is the law against "social parasites" (a term only too familiar to the student of Nazi totalitarianism) by which at any moment any number of people can again disappear into the concentration camps without having committed any crime against the regime. The totalitarian character of the decree is illustrated by the careful omission of criminal acts which remain subject to prosecution in court, by the failure to define what constitutes a "social crime," and by the extra-legal way of its punishment: deportation to places which are not identified. As a matter of fact, the issuance of this law should be enough to show that all the talk about a new Soviet legality is sheer hypocrisy.

Another indication appears in Khrushchev's secret speech at the Twentieth Party Congress. The speech was originally not meant for public consumption; it addressed the higher echelons of the Russian party, and particularly those who were involved in the gamble of "collective leadership." This audience probably understood immediately that the speech could be interpreted in two altogether different ways. Either Stalin's

mental sickness was the cause of all crimes, and then nobody was to blame, neither those who heard Mr. Khrushchev nor Mr. Khrushchev himself; moreover, and even more important, in this case the mutual fear from which the collective leadership emerged was unjustified, because only an unbalanced mind would plot murder. Or, because of his mental condition and insane suspiciousness, Stalin had been susceptible to evil influences, and in this case not Stalin was to blame but whoever used his diseased power for his own ends. The first alternative remained the official interpretation until last summer when Khrushchev, with the help of the army, seized power. The second reading became official policy when Khrushchev justified his coup d'état by stressing Malenkov's job as head of Stalin's personal secretariat, which had made him the unofficial head of the NKVD. It is common knowledge that the techniques of Khrushchev's coup d'état followed closely the pattern set by Stalin in the late twenties for the liquidation of the triumvirate and the right and left wing factions in the party, and it therefore seemed only proper that Khrushchev immediately rehabilitate his late master and curtail certain intellectual liberties.

No one, least of all probably Mr. Khrushchev himself, can know what the course of his future actions will be. One thing is certain: on the basis of his coup d'état speech, he can not only liquidate his exiled colleagues from the collective leadership at any moment, he can also let loose a new purge of Stalin collaborators in the higher echelons of the party, governmental and managerial bureaucracies. The law against social parasites, on the other hand, makes possible the reintroduction of mass-deportations and the re-establishment of slave labor on a large scale, should this prove desirable. As yet, nothing has been de-

cided; but if one reads certain recent statements of the Kadar group in Hungary, which mirrors Khrushchev very closely (Kadar's denunciation of Rakosi was modelled after the pattern of Khrushchev's earlier denunciation of Stalin), and which held that "the old Stalinist group had not been severe enough in crushing the enemies of socialism," that its mistake was "an insufficient application of the dictatorship of the proletariat,"⁷ one wonders if the hopes of some Western observers for the emergence of some "enlightened totalitarianism" will not turn out to be wishful thinking.

The last of the post-Stalin changes in the USSR to be mentioned in our context concerns the temporary shift of the party's emphasis from the police to the army. In recent years, Western observers placed their greatest hope for a change within the totalitarian system on the sudden ascendancy of the army and especially on the rise of Marshal Zhukov in the Soviet hierarchy. These hopes were not entirely unfounded, for it has thus far been an outstanding characteristic of totalitarian government that the army played a subordinate role and could not compete with the police cadres either in power or prestige. They were, however, exaggerated because another prominent feature of totalitarian government was left out of account. It was forgotten that no other form of government is so flexible in its institutions, can so easily shift power from one apparatus to the other or create new ones without even having to liquidate the old. If we call totalitarian government monolithic, we must be aware that the term applies only to its all-pervading ideological rigidity and that this rigidity is matched and contrasted by an extra-

ordinary opportunism in policies and an even more extraordinary multiplication of offices and institutions.

Moreover, ascendancy of the police over the military apparatus is the hallmark of all, and not only of totalitarian tyrannies; in the latter case, it not so much answered the need to suppress the population at home as it fitted the ideological claim to global rule. For it is evident that those who regard the whole earth as their future territory will stress the organ of domestic violence and rule conquered territory with police methods and personnel rather than with the army. Thus, the Nazis used their SS troops, essentially a police force, for the rule and even conquest of foreign territories with the ultimate aim of amalgamation of the army and police under the leadership of the SS. In view of the flexibility of totalitarianism, we should be prepared for the possibility of the opposite process, the transformation of the army and the military into a police organ, or for an amalgamation of military and police troops under the command of the higher officer corps of the army; as long as the party remains the uncontested highest authority, this does not necessarily preclude police methods of rule. This would have been impossible in Germany because of the strong military traditions of the *Reichswehr* which could be broken only from the outside. But this reason, if it ever had the same force in Russia, certainly is valid only so long as the officer corps is not exclusively chosen from the ranks of the party and is not so reliable and pliable as the elite cadres of the police. It is quite possible that Khrushchev will replace the political commissars in the army by the same control from within—exerted by trusted officers—and supplement it with the same organized mob rule—the mob in this instance being the soldiers—by which he is trying to re-

⁷ See Paul Landy, "Hungary since the Revolution," in *Problems of Communism*, September-October, 1957.

place police control in cultural and economic matters. If this should succeed, the decisive difference between army and police would cease to exist.

When, in the decisive moment of the succession crisis, Khrushchev appealed to Zhukov for support, the army's ascendancy over the police was an accomplished fact. This had been one of the automatic consequences of the breaking up of the police empire, the other being a temporary strengthening of the managerial group who were rid of their most serious economic competitor and, at the same time, inherited the huge police share in Soviet industries, mines and real estate. It speaks for Khrushchev's shrewdness that he grasped these consequences more quickly than his colleagues and acted accordingly. Of the two beneficiaries of the partial liquidation of the police apparatus, the army was by far the stronger for the simple reason that the only instrument of violence left with which to decide inner-party conflicts was the army. And, indeed, Khrushchev used Zhukov exactly the same way Stalin had used his relationships to the police in the succession struggle of thirty years ago. Yet, just as in the case of Stalin the supreme power continued to reside in the party, not in the police, so in this case it was never the army but again the party apparatus which retained the highest power. And just as Stalin never hesitated to purge his police cadres and liquidate their chiefs, so Khrushchev has followed up his inner-party maneuvers by removing Zhukov from the highest command. But even in the days of his highest prestige, Zhukov did not obtain more than minor concessions such as a new party directive affirming the supreme authority of military commands against interference by political commissars, and they bore an ominous resemblance to conditions during the war when military

considerations overruled party indoctrination for a few years.

This last point is decisive. Unfortunately, there hardly ever was anything to substantiate hopes for a peaceful transformation of totalitarian domination into a military dictatorship. The latter, curiously enough, has come to be currently identified with a determinedly peaceful disposition. But the observation that generals are among the most peace-loving and least dangerous creatures in the world, though quite correct in the Western hemisphere of the last forty years, does not necessarily hold true for those who by definition are aggressors. Zhukov certainly is not another Eisenhower, and throughout the period of rising army prestige, there have been signs that Russia prepared herself for war. This has little to do with the launching of satellites and the development of an intercontinental rocket, although these successes gave the policy its material basis. What we should not forget is that Malenkov's statement in 1954: that a third world war under the conditions of nuclear warfare would spell doom to mankind as a whole was immediately followed by his defeat. The trouble was that he probably meant what he said, for his program of non-military industrial development and greater production of consumer goods was in line with this statement—together they most likely cost him the support of the army and helped Khrushchev in the inner-party struggle. One year later, at any rate, Molotov expressed the opposite conviction: that nuclear war would be disastrous only for the imperialist and capitalist powers, whereas the communist bloc would profit by it no less than it had profited by the two previous wars. Khrushchev uttered the same opinion in 1956 and confirmed it officially in 1957 prior to Zhukov's fall: "A new world war could only end in

collapse for capitalism . . . Socialism will live on while capitalism will not remain. For despite great losses mankind will not only survive, but will continue to develop." So emphatic was this statement in an interview for foreign consumption about peaceful coexistence, that he felt himself that "some may think Communists are interested in war, since it would lead to the victory of socialism."⁸ This, to be sure, never meant that Russia actually was on the point of starting a war. Totalitarian leaders can change their minds like everyone else, and it stands to reason that they are wavering not only between the hope for victory and the fear of defeat, but between the hope that victory may make them the uncontested masters over the globe and fear lest, exhausted by a too costly victory, they be left alone to face the growing power colossus of China. The latter considerations, which we assume hypothetically, are along national lines; if they prevail, Russia may indeed be interested in coming to a temporary arrangement with the United States to freeze the present constellation in which the two super-powers are bound to recognize and respect the existing spheres of influence.

The demotion of Zhukov may be the most dramatic manifestation of this change of mind. From the little we know at this moment, it seems likely that Zhukov, accused of "adventurism," the inner-party equivalent for war-mongering, wanted war and that Khrushchev, after a moment's hesitation, decided to follow once more the "wisdom" of his dead master whose ruthlessness in domestic policies always was matched by an extreme caution in foreign affairs. It could also be that Khrushchev accused Zhukov of war preparations because he

himself is toying with the idea—as Stalin accused Tukhachevski of plotting with Nazi Germany when he himself prepared an alliance with Hitler. These zig-zags of policy, so disturbing and confusing for outside observers, lie in the very nature of this form of government, and we should not forget that the new changes in the Soviet power apparatus again are, and are meant to be, of a temporary nature. In Khrushchev's own words: "In life one cell dies and another takes its place but life goes on." At any event, it was only proper that Zhukov's dismissal should have been followed by the strongest affirmation of peacefulness that has come out of Soviet Russia since the end of the war, a toast hailing the wartime alliance against Hitler accompanied by a veritable curse on the warmongers—who in Khrushchev's mind just then were not the "capitalist and imperialist powers" but rather his generals at home: "Let him be damned who thinks of war! Let him be damned who wants war!" Unfortunately, and much as we are tempted to put our faith into a sincere change of Mr. Khrushchev's heart, it is only too likely that his words are for public consumption in Russia and the satellite countries, where Zhukov's popularity perhaps makes a denunciation of him as a warmonger necessary. They probably do not indicate a change in the party's inner evaluation of war under the conditions of nuclear weapons.

It is in the terrible nature of these things that there would be such expressions of reassurance precisely at a time when the situation would again become considerably worse for the Russian people as well as for those in the satellite countries, who recently have enjoyed a comparatively easier and more plentiful life. It was already a mainstay of Stalin's politics to combine an aggressive foreign policy with concessions at home, and

⁸ See the text of James Reston's interview with Khrushchev in the *New York Times*, October 10, 1957.

vice versa, and it is probable that here, too, Khrushchev will show himself a faithful disciple of his dead master.

This is bad enough, but it is not the worst. The worst is that under these circumstances the most important political issue of the nuclear age, the war question, cannot be raised, let alone solved. As far as the non-totalitarian world is concerned, it is a matter of fact that another world war will harbor a threat of destruction to the existence of mankind, even to the existence of organic life on earth. This, obviously, makes all past political thought about war, its possible justification for the sake of freedom, its role as an *ultima ratio* in foreign affairs, perfectly obsolete. But what is a matter of fact for us, is a matter of ideology for the totalitarian mind. The point is not in differences of opinion and basic convictions nor the concomitant difficulties in coming to an agreement, but in the much more terrifying impossibility of agreeing about facts.⁹ Mr. Khrushchev's recent off-the-record contribution to the war discussion, "poor men do not mind fire," is truly appalling, not merely because such popular verities of yesterday have become dangerous irrelevancies today, but because it shows with rare precision that, no matter how vulgar his expressions may be, he actually thinks and operates within the closed framework of his ideology and will not permit new facts to penetrate it.

It has always been an error to measure the threat of totalitarianism by the yardstick of the relatively harmless conflict between a communist and a

capitalist society and to overlook the explosive contradiction between the totalitarian fiction and the everyday world of factuality in which we live. But it was never more dangerously wrong than today when the same technical discoveries, which taken together constitute for us a factually changed world, are at the disposition of those who in dead seriousness regard them as mere means, that is, as devices with which to make a purely fictitious world built of lies and based on denials of facts. Not even the freedom of mankind, let alone its survival, depends upon a free market economy; yet freedom as well as survival may well depend upon our success or failure to persuade the other part of the world to recognize facts as they are and to come to terms with the factuality of the world as it is.

II. THE HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION

Perhaps nothing illustrates better the present difference in mentality between the Soviet Union and her satellites than the fact that Khrushchev's speech at the Twentieth Party Congress could at the time end the thaw in Russia¹⁰ and release the unrest, finally the uprising, in the newly bolshevized territories. Here the sinister ambiguity we mentioned above obviously was lost on the average reader who must have read the speech with pretty much the same understanding as the average reader in the free world. In this naive reading it could not but cause a tremendous relief, because it sounded as though a normal human being were talking about normal occurrences—insanity and crimes creeping into politics; Marxian phraseology and historical necessity were conspicuous by their absence. Had this been

⁹ This basic difference comes out most clearly in dialogues between Westerners and totalitarian-trained people. Both Mr. Reston's interview and the correspondence between Silone and Anissimov, *loc. cit.*, read like object lessons in this peculiarity of the totalitarian mentality with its horrifying capacity to avoid all real issues and dissolve all facts in ideological talk.

¹⁰ This is the opinion of Boris I. Nicolaevsky, *loc. cit.*, which he amply supports by a careful compilation and analysis of all available information.

the "correct understanding" of the speech, the Twentieth Party Congress would have been an event of enormous significance. It would have indicated a break with totalitarian methods, though with neither socialist nor dictatorial procedures, and healed the breach between the two world powers. For Khrushchev had only confirmed the charge of the free world that this was not so much a communist as a crime-ridden government which lacked not only the democratic type of legality but any restriction of power through law whatsoever. If from now on the Soviet government intended to operate a socialist economy on the same level as the western world operated a free-market economy, then there was no reason why the two main powers, together with their respective allies, should not be able to coexist and cooperate peacefully and in good faith.

Several months elapsed before the secret party speech reached first the western world through the *New York Times* and then the communist-ruled countries. Its immediate consequence was something unheard of—open rebellions in Poland and Hungary which had not happened through all the preceding years when Stalin was silently and most efficiently downgraded, when a number of Stalinists like Rakosi in Hungary had been removed from power and a gradual relaxation of controls had taken place, nor had it happened when these controls, already prior to the publication of the secret speech, were gradually re-tightened and some Stalinists rehabilitated. The point is that the people were aroused only by open words, and not by silent maneuvers, no matter how telling they might have been for the observer of the totalitarian scene, and no amount of bad faith behind these words—and this bad faith was by no means inactive—could alter their inflammatory power. Not acts, "mere words" had succeeded

much against their intention in breaking the deadly spell of impotent apathy which totalitarian terror and ideology cast over the minds of men.

However, this did not happen everywhere. It happened only where some old-guards, like Nagy and Gomulka, had miraculously survived the meticulous care with which Stalin had purged not only the Russian party but the international movement of everybody who was not a mere agent. In the beginning, the Polish and Hungarian developments were quite similar. In both countries, an inner-party split had occurred between the "Muscovites" and these survivors, and the general mood, including the stress on national tradition, religious freedom and violent dissatisfaction among students, was similar. One is tempted to say that it was almost an accident that what happened in Hungary did not happen in Poland and vice versa. The fact, however, is that Gomulka, setting before the Polish people's eyes the tragic fate of Hungary, could stop the rebellion in its initial stage, so that neither the exhilarating experience of power which comes from acting together nor the consequences resulting from boldly putting freedom on the market place could come to pass.

The third fact to remember is that the rebellion in both countries started with intellectuals and university students, and generally with the younger generation, that is, with those strata of the population whose material well-being and ideological indoctrination had been one of the prime concerns of the regime. Not the underprivileged, but the overprivileged of communist society took the initiative, and their motive was neither their own nor their fellow-citizens' material misery, but exclusively Freedom and Truth.¹¹ This, especially, must

¹¹ The truly admirable United Nations' *Report on the Problem of Hungary* quotes a young

have been as rude a lesson for Moscow as it was heartwarming for the free world. Not only that bribes did not work, but the rise of totalitarian ideologies and movements has thus far always attracted the intelligentsia, and experience has shown that nobody can be so easily bribed and frightened into submission to nonsense as scholars, writers and artists. The voice from Eastern Europe, speaking so plainly and simply of freedom and truth, sounded like an ultimate affirmation that human nature is unchangeable, that nihilism will be futile, that even in the absence of all teaching and the presence of overwhelming indoctrination a yearning for freedom and truth will rise out of man's heart and mind forever.

Unfortunately, such conclusions need qualification. First, the rebellions happened in countries whose experience with total domination had been quite short-lived. Not before 1949 were the satellite countries even superficially bolshevized, and the process was interrupted in 1953 by Stalin's death and the subsequent period of thaw. The succeeding struggle resulted in the formation of factions, and discussion became inevitable. The cry for freedom was born in the atmosphere of these inner-party discussions, but only in the recently conquered territories; for nothing comparable with these words and deeds could be witnessed in Russia proper. Ilya Ehrenburg, an old bohemian and habitué of left-bank Paris bistros, may have nourished certain hopes when he coined the right metaphor, "thaw," for the new party line, but he is of course much more

typical of those whom the "gods have failed" than of the Russian intelligentsia. Dudintsev's novel *Not by Bread Alone*, a product of the encouraged self-criticism mentioned above, is not concerned with freedom at all, but with the opening of careers to talent. The scarce evidence of some rebelliousness among Russian intellectuals points much rather to a yearning for the right to know factual truth than for any right to freedom. One such instance occurs also in Dudintsev's novel, where he recounts the early days of the Nazi invasion when he was watching from a trench a fight between German and Russian airplanes in which the messerschmitts proved victorious although they were outnumbered: "Something snapped in me because I had always been told that our planes were the fastest and the best." Here, indeed, the author tells of one long moment during which totalitarian disputing-away of facts did not prevail; experience of factual truth exploded the "historical truth" of the party's argument, whose "our planes are the fastest and the best" means: eventually we shall have the fastest and the best planes, perhaps at the cost of destroying all those who could compete with us.

In view of recent events, it is tempting to underestimate the effectiveness of total domination and the stability of the totalitarian mind in the midst of the fictitious world provided for it. Whatever our convictions and hopes concerning human nature may be, all our experiences with these regimes indicate that, once they are firmly established, factual reality is a much greater danger to them than an innate yearning for freedom. We know this from the Stalinist measure to deport the returning soldiers of the Russian occupation army *en masse* to concentration camps because they had been exposed to the impact of reality; as we know it from the curiously complete breakdown of

girl student as follows: "Even though we might lack bread and other necessities of life, we wanted freedom. We, the young people, were particularly hampered because we were brought up amidst lies. We continually had to lie. We could not have a healthy idea, because everything was choked in us. We wanted freedom of thought."

Nazi indoctrination after Hitler's defeat and the automatic destruction of his fictitious world. The point is that the impact of factual reality, like all other human experiences, needs speech if it is to survive the moment of experience, needs talk and communication with others to remain sure of itself. Total domination succeeds to the extent that it succeeds in interrupting all channels of communication, those from person to person inside the four walls of privacy no less than the public ones which are safeguarded in democracies by freedom of speech and opinion. Whether this process of making every person incommunicado succeeds except in the extreme situations of solitary confinement and of torture is hard to say; in any event, it takes time, and it is obvious that it is far from completed in the satellite countries. So long as terror is not supplemented by the ideological compulsion from within, so hideously manifest in the self-denunciations of the show trials,¹² the ability of people to distinguish between truth and lies on the elementary factual level remains unimpaired; oppression, therefore, is felt for what it is and freedom is demanded.

¹² The collapse of the regime in Hungary has yielded one more beautiful example of motivation and technique of these self-denunciations by making public the preparation of Rajk for his show trial. Kadar was in charge and his conversation with Rajk was secretly recorded by Rakosi, presumably for future use against Kadar, and the record played back at the Central Committee's meeting which ousted Rakosi. What the comrades heard was the following: "Dear Laci, I come to you on behalf of Comrade Rakosi. He requested me to come and explain the situation to you. Of course, we all know that you are innocent. But Comrade Rakosi believes that you will understand. Only really great comrades are chosen for such roles. He asked me to tell you that by doing this you will render historic service to the Communist movement." (Quoted from E. M., "Janos Kadar: A Profile," in *Problems of Communism*.) What a combination of gross flattery and appeal to ideological convictions!

The Hungarian people, young and old, knew that they were "living amidst lies" and asked, unanimously and in all manifestos, for something the Russian intelligentsia apparently has even forgotten how to dream of, namely, for freedom of thought. It would probably be erroneous to conclude from this unanimity that the same concern for freedom of thought which gave rise to the rebellion among the intellectuals also turned the rebellion into a revolution of the whole people, an uprising which spread like wildfire until nobody was left outside its ranks except the members of the political police—the only Hungarians prepared to defend the regime. A similar error would be to conclude from the initiative taken by members of the Communist Party that the revolution was primarily an inner-party affair, a revolt of "true" against "false" communists. The facts speak an altogether different language. What are the facts?

An unarmed and essentially harmless student demonstration grew from a few thousand suddenly and spontaneously into a huge crowd which took it upon itself to carry out one of the students' demands, the overturning of Stalin's statue in one of the public squares in Budapest. The following day, some students went to the Radio Building to persuade the station to broadcast the sixteen points of their manifesto. A large crowd immediately gathered, as if from nowhere, and when the AVH, the police guarding the building, tried to disperse the crowd with a few shots, the revolution broke out. The masses attacked the police and acquired their first weapons. The workers, hearing of the situation, left the factories and joined the crowd. The army, called to defend the regime and help the armed police, sided with the revolution and armed the people. What started as a student demonstration had become an armed uprising in less than twenty-four hours.

From this moment onward, no programs, points or manifestos played any role; what carried the revolution was the sheer momentum of acting-together of the whole people whose demands were so obvious that they hardly needed elaborate formulation: Russian troops should leave the territory and free elections should leave the territory and free elections should determine a new government. The question was no longer how much freedom to permit to action, speech and thought, but how to institutionalize a freedom which was already an accomplished fact. For if we leave aside the outside interventions of Russian troops—first of those stationed in the country and then of regular battalions coming from Russia in full battle preparation—we may well say that never a revolution achieved its aims so quickly, so completely and with so few losses. The amazing thing about the Hungarian Revolution is that there was no civil war. For the Hungarian army disintegrated in hours and the dictatorship was stripped of all power in a couple of days. No group, no class in the nation opposed the will of the people once it had become known and its voice had been heard in the market place. For the members of the AVH, who remained loyal to the end, formed neither group nor class, the lower echelons having been recruited from the dregs of the population: criminals, Nazi agents, highly compromised members of the Hungarian fascist party, the higher ranks being composed of Moscow agents, Hungarians with Russian citizenship under the orders of NKVD officers.

The swift disintegration of the whole power structure—party, army and governmental offices—and the absence of internal strife in the developments that followed, are all the more remarkable when we consider that the uprising was clearly started by communists, who, how-

ever, did not retain the initiative, and still never became the object of wrath and vengeance for non-communists nor turned themselves against the people. The striking absence of ideological dispute, the concomitant lack of fanaticism and the ensuing atmosphere of fraternity which came into being with the first demonstration in the streets and lasted until the bitter end, can be explained only on the assumption that ideological indoctrination had disintegrated even more swiftly than the political structure. It was as though ideology, of whatever shade and brand, had simply been wiped out of existence and memory the moment the people, intellectuals and workers, communists and non-communists, found themselves together in the streets fighting for freedom.¹³ In this respect, the change in reality brought about by the revolution had much the same effect on the minds of the Hungarian people as the sudden breakdown of the Nazi world had on the minds of the German people.

Important as these aspects are, they tell us more about the nature of the regime the Hungarian Revolution rebelled against than about the revolution itself. In its positive significance, the outstanding feature of the uprising was that no chaos resulted from the actions of people without leadership and without previously formulated program. First, there was no looting, no trespassing of property, among a multitude whose standard of life had been miserable and whose hunger for merchandise notorious. There were no crimes against life either, for the few instances of pub-

¹³ This aspect is especially striking when we learn that the insurgents were almost immediately joined by "800 cadets from the Petöfi Military Academy. These were mostly sons of high Government and Communist Party officials and AVH officers; they had led a privileged life in the Military Academy and had been indoctrinated for years." (United Nations' Report.)

lic hanging of AVH officers were conducted with remarkable restraint and discrimination. Instead of the mob rule which might have been expected, there appeared immediately, almost simultaneously with the uprising itself, the Revolutionary and Workers' Councils, that is, the same organization which for more than a hundred years now has emerged whenever the people have been permitted for a few days, or a few weeks or months, to follow their own political devices without a government (or a party program) imposed from above.

For these councils made their first appearance in the revolution which swept Europe in 1848; they reappeared in the revolt of the Paris Commune in 1871, existed for a few weeks during the first Russian revolution of 1905, to reappear in full force in the October revolution in Russia and the November revolutions in Germany and Austria after the first World War. Until now, they have always been defeated, but by no means only by the "counter-revolution." The Bolshevik regime destroyed their power even under Lenin and attested to their popularity by stealing their name (*soviet* being the Russian word for council); when Soviet-Russian tanks crushed the revolution in Hungary, they actually destroyed the only free and revolutionary *soviets* in existence anywhere in the world.¹⁴ And in Germany, again, it was not the "reaction," but the Social Democrats who liquidated the Soldiers' and Workers' Councils in 1919.

In the case of the Hungarian Revolution, even more markedly than in the case of earlier ones, the establishment of the Councils represented "the first practical step to restore order and to reorganize the Hungarian economy on a socialist basis, but without rigid Party

control or the apparatus of terror."¹⁵ The councils thus were charged with two tasks, one political, the other economic, and though it would be wrong to believe that the dividing line between them was unblurred, we may assume that the Revolutionary Councils fulfilled mainly political functions while the Workers' Councils were supposed to handle economic life. In the following, we shall deal only with the Revolutionary Councils and the political aspect; their immediate task was to prevent chaos and the spreading of crime, and in this they were quite successful. The question whether economic, as distinguished from political, functions can be handled by councils, whether, in other words, it is possible to run factories under the management and ownership of the workers, we shall have to leave open. (As a matter of fact, it is quite doubtful whether the political principle of equality and self-rule can be applied to the economic sphere of life as well. It may be that ancient political theory, which held that economics, since it was bound up with the necessities of life, needed the rule of masters to function well, was not so wrong after all. For it is somehow, albeit paradoxically, supported by the fact that whenever the modern age has believed that history is primarily the result of economic forces, it has come to the conviction that man is not free and that history is subject to necessity.)

At any event, the Revolutionary and the Workers' Councils, though they emerged together, are better kept apart, because the former were primarily the answer to political tyranny, whereas the latter in the case of the Hungarian Revolution were the reaction against trade unions that did not represent the workers but the party's control over them. Not only the Workers' Councils, the

¹⁴ The only writer, so far as I know, who made this point was Ignazio Silone in an article in *The New Leader*, XL (June 21, 1957).

¹⁵ This is the evaluation of the United Nations' *Report*.

program of the Revolutionary Councils too must be understood in the context of special conditions of the Hungarian Revolution. Thus the demand for free general elections belongs to the program inherent in the emergence of councils everywhere, whereas the demand to restore the multi-party system, as it had ruled Hungary and all European countries prior to the rise of tyranny, was the almost automatic reaction to the particularities of the situation, the shameful suppression and persecution of all parties which had preceded the one-party dictatorship.

In order to understand the council system, it is well to remember that it is as old as the party system itself; as such, it represents the only alternative to it, that is, the only alternative of democratic electoral representation to the one presented by the Continental multi-party system with its insistence on class interests on the one hand and ideology, or *Weltanschauung*, on the other. But while the historical origin of the party system lies in Parliament, the councils were born exclusively out of the actions and spontaneous demands of the people, and they were not deduced from an ideology nor foreseen, let alone preconceived, by any theory about the best form of government. Wherever they appeared, they were met with utmost hostility from the party-bureaucracies and their leaders from right to left and with the unanimous neglect of political theorists and political scientists. The point is that the councils have always been undoubtedly democratic, but in a sense never seen before and never thought about. And since nobody, neither statesmen nor political scientists nor parties, has ever paid any serious attention to this new and wholly untried form of organization, its stubborn re-emergence for more than a century could not be more spontaneous and less influenced by

outside interest or theory.

Under modern conditions, the councils are the only democratic alternative we know to the party system, and the principles on which they are based stand in sharp opposition to the principles of the party system in many respects. Thus, the men elected for the councils are chosen at the bottom, and not selected by the party machinery and proposed to the electorate either as individuals with alternative choices or as a slate of candidates. The choice, moreover, of the voter is not prompted by a program or a platform or an ideology, but exclusively by his estimation of a man, in whose personal integrity, courage and judgment he is supposed to have enough confidence to entrust him with his representation. The elected, therefore, is not bound by anything except trust in his personal qualities, and his pride is "to have been elected by the workers, and not by the government"¹⁶ or a party. Once such a body of trusted men is elected, it will of course again develop differences of opinion which in turn may lead into the formation of "parties." But these groups of men holding the same opinion within the councils would not be parties, strictly speaking; they would constitute those factions from which the parliamentary parties originally developed. The election of a candidate would not depend upon his adherence to a given faction, but still on his personal power of persuasion with which he could present his point of view. In other words, the councils would control the parties, they would not be their representatives. The strength of any given faction would not depend upon its bureaucratic apparatus and not even upon the appeal

¹⁶ See *The Revolt in Hungary; A Documentary Chronology of Events*, which records the story of the Hungarian revolution in a compilation of the broadcasts of the Hungarian radio stations, official and unofficial. Published by the Free Europe Committee, New York, n.d.

of its program of *Weltanschauung*, but on the number of trusted and trustworthy men it holds in its ranks. This was the reason, for instance, why Lenin felt he had to emasculate the *soviets* in the initial stages of the Russian Revolution; it turned out that the Social Revolutionaries counted more men trusted by the people than the Bolsheviks, so that the power of the Communist Party, which had been responsible for the revolution, was endangered by the council system which had grown out of the revolution.

Remarkable, finally, is the great inherent flexibility of the system, which seems to need no special conditions for its establishment except the coming together and acting together of a certain number of people on a non-temporary basis. In Hungary, we have seen the simultaneous setting-up of all kinds of councils—neighborhood councils which emerged from living together and grew into county and other territorial councils, revolutionary councils which grew out of fighting together, councils of writers and artists which, one is tempted to think, were born in the *cafés*, students' and youths' councils at the university, military councils in the army, councils of civil servants in the ministries, workers' councils in the factories, and so on. The men elected were communists and non-communists; party lines seem to have played no role whatsoever, the criterion, in the words of a newspaper, being solely that there is "none among them who would misuse his power or think only of his personal position." And this is more a criterion of qualification than of morality. Whoever misuses power or perverts it into violence, or is only interested in his private affairs and without concern for the common world, is simply not fit to play a role in political life. The same principles were observed in the further stages of election; for the

councils, elected directly at the base, were urged to elect representatives for the higher bodies "without regard for Party affiliation and with due regard to the confidence of the working people."¹⁷

One of the most striking aspects of the Hungarian Revolution is that this principle of the council system not only re-emerged, but that in twelve short days a good deal of its range of potentialities could emerge with it. The councilmen were hardly elected in direct vote when these new councils began freely to coordinate among themselves to choose from their own midst the representatives for the higher councils up to the Supreme National Council, the counterpart of normal government—and the initiative for this came from the just revived National Peasant Party, certainly the last group to be suspected of extreme ideas. While this Supreme Council remained in preparation, the necessary preliminary steps had been taken everywhere: workers' councils had set up coordinating committees and Central Workers' Councils were already functioning in many areas; revolutionary councils in the provinces were co-ordinated and planning to set up a National Revolutionary Committee with which to replace the National Assembly. Here, as in all other instances, when for the shortest historical moment the voice of the people has been heard, unaltered by the shouts of the mob and unstifled by the bureaucracies of the parties, we can do no more than draw a very sketchy picture of the potentialities and physiognomy of the only democratic system which in Europe, where the party system was discredited almost as soon as it was born, was ever really popular. (There is, and always has been, a decisive difference between the Continental multi-party system and the Anglo-American two-party system which I cannot

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

discuss here, but which the reader must keep in mind for a proper understanding of European events and revolutions.) The rise of the councils, not the restoration of parties, was the clear sign of a true upsurge of democracy against dictatorship, of freedom against tyranny.

When we ponder the lesson of the Hungarian Revolution, it may be well to take into consideration the steps taken by the restored regime. The Russian army in a full-fledged invasion needed three full weeks to pacify the country—which indeed speaks well for the solidity of the organizational power of the councils. Not one of the demands of the people was recognized, with one very important exception. The peasants, who in Hungary as in Poland had spontaneously left the collectives, were not forced back, with the result that the whole experiment of collective farming practically collapsed in both countries and the agricultural output of these regions fell far below the requirements for the national economy. The concession to the peasants, therefore, the only class which at least up to now has derived certain profits from the rebellions, was important materially as well as ideologically. The first blow of bloody oppression was directed against the Revolutionary Councils, the organ of action and representative for the people as a whole. After the nation had been once more reduced to impotence, freedom of thought was adamantly and without the slightest concession stamped out. This was followed by the dissolution of the workers' councils, which the regime regarded as a substitute for party and government-directed trade unions rather than as a political body.

If we translate this order of priority in crushing the revolution into theory, it follows that freedom of action was considered the most dangerous to total domination, that this was closely fol-

lowed by freedom of thought; since interest representation clearly contains an element of action, it too must go, but it is considered of less immediate danger. The only sphere where temporary concessions were deemed possible and wise was the economic realm where nothing more was at stake than laboring and consuming, which obviously are the lowest and most compulsory of all human activities.

III. THE SATELLITE SYSTEM

The last words to come out of free Hungary were spoken over the Radio Station Kossuth and ended with the following sentence: "Today it is Hungary and tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow, it will be the turn of other countries because the imperialism of Moscow does not know borders, and is only trying to play for time." A few days earlier, the Communist Free Radio (Rajk) had already declared that "it was not only Stalin who used Communism as a pretext to expand Russian imperialism" and that it had been among the goals of the Hungarian Revolution "to present a clear picture of Russia's brutal colonial rule."

We said in the beginning that the development and expansion of post-war Soviet totalitarianism must be seen in the flaming light of the Hungarian Revolution. This light—who would deny it?—is not steady: it flares and flickers; yet it is the only authentic light we have. The words spoken during the event by men acting in freedom and fighting for it carry more weight and, so we hope, are heard by more people than theoretical reflections, precisely because they are spoken on the spur and in the excitement of the moment.¹⁸ If these people

¹⁸ To avoid misunderstandings: I do not mean to attribute the same high significance to reports or theories by victims or eye-wit-

said that what they were fighting against was imperialism, political science must accept the term, although we might have preferred, for conceptual as well as historical reasons, to reserve the word 'imperialism' for the colonial expansion of Europe which began in the last third of the nineteenth century and ended with the liquidation of British rule over India. Our task then can only be to analyze what kind of imperialism developed out of the totalitarian form of government.

Imperialism, both word and phenomenon, was unknown until the ever-quicken pace of industrial production forced open the territorial limitations of the nation-state.¹⁹ Its outstanding feature was expressed in the slogan of the time: expansion for expansion's sake, which meant expansion without regard to what traditionally had been regarded as national interests such as the defense of the territory and its limited aggrandizement through annexation of neighboring lands. Imperialist expansion was prompted not by political, but economic motives, and it followed the expanding economy wherever it happened to lead in the form of investment of capital, surplus money within the national economy, and of the emigration of unemployable people, who had also become superfluous to the life of the nation. Imperialism thus was the result of the nation-state's attempt to survive under the circumstances of a new economy and in the presence of an emerging world market. Its dilemma was that economic in-

nesses. The presence of terror paralyzes and sterilizes thought even more effectively than action. If one does not mind risking one's life, it is easier to act under conditions of terror than to think. And the spell cast by terror over man's mind can be broken only by freedom, not by mere thought.

¹⁹ A good summary of the historical background is now available in R. Koebner, "The Emergence of the Concept of Imperialism," in the *Cambridge Journal*, 1952.

terests of the nationals demanded an expansion which could not be justified on the grounds of traditional nationalism with its insistence on historical identity of people, state and territory.

From beginning to end and for better and worse, the destinies of imperialism, the fate that befell the ruling nations no less than the lot suffered by their "subject races," were determined by this origin. National consciousness was perverted into race consciousness, prompted by the natural solidarity of "white men" in alien lands, which, in turn, made the subject races color conscious. But together with racism, nationalism made its inroads into the ancient cultures of Asia and the tribal wilderness of Africa, and if the imperialist-minded colonial bureaucracy could turn a deaf ear to the national aspirations which they themselves had aroused, the nation-state could not without denying the very principle of its own existence. The colonial bureaucracies lived in a perennial conflict with their home governments, and while imperialism undermined nationalism by shifting the loyalties from the nation to the race, the nation-state with its still intact legal and political institutions always prevailed in preventing the worst excesses. The fear of boomerang effects of imperialism upon the mother country remained strong enough to make the national parliaments a bulwark of justice for the oppressed people and against the colonial administration.

Imperialism on the whole was a failure because of the dichotomy between the nation-state's legal principles and the methods needed to oppress other people permanently. This failure was neither necessary nor due to ignorance or incompetence. British imperialists knew very well that "administrative massacres" could keep India in bondage, but they also knew that public opinion at home would not stand for such measures. Im-

perialism could have been a success if the nation-state had been willing to pay the price, to commit suicide and transform itself into a tyranny. It is one of the glories of Europe, and especially of Great Britain, that she preferred to liquidate the empire.

Such recollections of the past may serve to remind us of how much greater the chances of success are for an imperialism directed by a totalitarian government. Moreover, Russia was never a nation-state, strictly speaking; even the Czars ruled a multi-national empire from the power center in Moscow. The principle of national self-determination, this nightmare of the old imperialists who had to deny to the subject people the very principle of their own political existence, poses not even a problem to the Moscow rulers today. They rule the satellites with essentially the same device they use for their empire at home; they make concessions to national culture on the folklore and linguistic level, imposing at the same time not only the Moscow-conceived and -directed policy, but also Russian as the official language for all nationalities. Introduction of obligatory study of Russian was one of the first demands by Moscow in the process of bolshevization, as the demand for its abolition figured prominently in all manifestos in Hungary and Poland.

No dichotomy of principle, therefore, between home rule and colonial rule will impose restraint on totalitarian imperialism, and if it, too, has to fear certain boomerang effects from its imperialist adventures, they have other causes. Thus, the fact that the Russian army had to be called in to crush the Hungarian uprising may have been one of the reasons why Zhukov could nourish certain hopes of winning an ascendancy over the party at home and, at any rate, of consolidating his newly-won ascendancy over the police. For the Hungarian events

seemed to prove that police troops, though modelled after the Russian NKVD, were not sufficient to deal with a full-fledged rebellion. Of even greater importance, the swift disintegration of the Hungarian army, which alone had enabled an annoying but harmless show of dissatisfaction to grow into an armed uprising, demonstrated to what an extent the regime everywhere depended upon the loyalty of its soldiers and officers' corps. Khrushchev's quick reaction against such hopes and aspirations shows a concern with boomerang effects upon the home government similar to the concern of the older type of imperialism. But here the danger of boomerangs is temporary, because of the inevitable time lag in bolshevization between mother country and colony. Thus, the disaffection of satellite armies, their doubtful reliability in case of war, prove only that in these regions national military traditions are still intact and that bolshevization was slower in an institution which, after all, was inherited from the former regime and had not, like the political police, been built up from scratch.

Boomerang effects in totalitarian imperialism, naturally, are distinguished from those of national imperialism in that they work in the opposite direction—the few, faint-hearted stirrings of unrest in Russia probably were caused by events in Poland and Hungary—and so do the measures the government is forced to take to combat them. For just as European imperialism could never transgress certain limits of oppression even when the effectiveness of extreme measures was beyond doubt, because public opinion at home would not have supported them and a legal government could not have survived them, so Russian totalitarianism is forced to crush opposition and withhold all concessions, even when they may pacify the oppressed countries for the time being and make

them more reliable in case of war, because such "mildness" would endanger the government at home and place the conquered territories in a privileged position.

This last point was, indeed, of considerable importance in the initial stages of the satellite system, when the main concern of the ruling imperialist power was not how to maintain a distinction between national and colonial areas, but on the contrary how to equalize conditions in the newly conquered territories down to the level of Soviet Russia herself. Russia's post-war expansion was not caused, and her rule of the conquered territories is not determined, by economic considerations; the profit motive, so conspicuous in Europe's overseas imperialism, is replaced here by sheer power considerations. But these are not of a national character and not led by the interest of Russia herself, although it is true that for almost a decade the Moscow rulers seemed interested in nothing more than robbing their satellites of their industrial and other possessions and forcing them into grossly unfair trade agreements. Yet the very neglect with which the Russians used to treat their spoils from dismantled industries, which were frequently ruined even before shipped to Russia, indicates that their true aim was much rather to force the satellite standard of life down than to raise their own. This trend has now been reversed and large quantities of coal, iron ore, oil as well as agricultural products are shipped back into the subject regions whose needs have become a serious drain on Russian resources and have caused severe shortages in the USSR. The goal is again equalization of conditions.

However, these and other distinctions between Western national and Russian totalitarian imperialism do not go to the heart of the matter. For the immediate

predecessor of totalitarian imperialism is not the British, Dutch or French version of overseas colonial rule, but the German, Austrian and Russian version of a continental imperialism which never actually succeeded, and therefore is neglected by students of imperialism, but which in the form of the so-called pan-movements—pan-Germanism and pan-Slavism—was a very potent political force in Central and Eastern Europe. Not only does totalitarianism, nazism no less than bolshevism, owe a heavy debt to pan-Germanism and pan-Slavism in matters of ideology and organization; their expansion program, though global in scope and thereby distinguished from those of the pan-movements, follows the aims of continental imperialism. The main point here is that the strategy of expansion follows geographic continuity and extends from a power center to a widening periphery which then is supposed to gravitate "naturally" toward its center. This cohesive extension could of course never have tolerated a dichotomy between home government and colonial rule; and since continental imperialism intended to found its "empire" in Europe itself, it did not depend upon a color line to distinguish between "higher and lower breeds"; instead it proposed to treat European peoples as colonials under the rule of a master race of Germanic or Slavic origin.

The word 'satellite' is indeed a very appropriate metaphor for the Russian version of totalitarian imperialism. Cohesive extension, and neither far-flung possessions nor the engineering of communist revolutions in distant countries, spells the present bolshevist strategy for global conquest. (It is indeed quite likely that Russia would be almost as unhappy as America if, through some queer accident of chaotic conditions, the Communist Party should be able to seize power legally in France.) Since the expansion

is continuous and starts from the national frontier, it can easily hide its ultimate aims behind traditional nationalist claims; thus, Stalin's demands at Yalta would hardly have been granted so easily if the allied statesmen had not felt that he demanded no more than what Russian foreign policy has traditionally aimed at. It was the same misunderstanding Hitler profited from at Munich when he claimed he wanted no more than the annexation of German territory in Austria and Czechoslovakia and the liberation of German minorities.

The satellite system itself, however, is neither the only nor the most natural version of totalitarian imperialism. It must be seen against the background of Nazi imperialism, with which the Russian model has only one thing in common, the insistence on cohesive expansion; Hitler's lack of interest in acquiring overseas possessions or pressing the nationalist German claim for restitution of former German colonies was notorious. Nazi Germany ruled Western Europe through Quislings, corrupt native politicians and collaborators, and carried out a policy of depopulation and extermination in the East with the aim of having these emptied lands colonized by elite troops after the war. Moscow's agents in the satellite countries are no Quislings, but old and tested members of the communist movement, and as such they are in no worse a position in the face of their Moscow masters than any Ukrainian or White Russian bureaucrat, who, also, is supposed to sacrifice the national interests of his people to the demands of the international movement or Moscow. And not even Stalin, it seems, wanted to exterminate the populations of the satellite countries and to recolonize the territory. Another alternative for Russian imperialism would have been to rule this whole region like the Baltic countries, without

the intermediary of local authorities, that is, to incorporate them directly into the Soviet Empire which claims to be a union of federal republics.

The satellite system is clearly a compromise and perhaps a temporary one. It was born in the post-war constellation of two great powers agreeing between themselves about their spheres of influence, albeit in a hostile manner. As such, the satellite system is the Russian answer to the American system of alliances, and their sham independence is important to Russia as the reflection of the intact national sovereignty of America's allies. The metaphor, unfortunately, is again only too appropriate; for it corresponds to the fears every country must feel when it goes into an alliance with one of the super-powers, a fear, that is, not so much of losing its identity altogether as of becoming a "satellite" country gravitating in the orbit, and kept alive only by the force of attraction, of the central power. And certainly the danger of the coexistence of two hostile super-powers is that every system of alliances initiated by either will automatically degenerate into a satellite system until the whole world is sucked into their power orbits. It has been American policy to divide the world into communist, allied and neutral countries with the aim of preserving the balance between the two super-powers by recognizing in fact, if not *de jure*, the respective spheres of influence and by insisting on the neutrality of the rest.²⁰ No matter how uneasy this balance of power may be, the image of American foreign policy is essentially that of a stable structure. But Russian foreign policy is guided by a different image in which there are no

²⁰ The sorry spectacle of the free world's strict non-intervention in Hungarian affairs and even toleration of a military invasion by Russian troops has shown to what a degree this recognition is a *fait accompli*.

neutral countries, but, as Khrushchev recently pointed out, "nationalist" ones, so that the important third part of the world consists of areas—in Asia and Africa—where, according to the communists, the national revolution is on the agenda and with it an automatic increase of Russia's sphere of influence. Insofar as recent Russian utterances about the possibilities of peaceful competition between the two super-powers are more than propaganda talk, it is not a competition in the production of cars, refrigerators and butter, but a competition in the gradual enlargement of the two respective spheres of influence that is at stake.

Although the satellite system may have been born as a compromise between the inherent tendencies of totalitarian domination and the need to maintain a facsimile of normal foreign policy with regard to the free world, the devices of rulership developed by Russian imperialism were quite in agreement with it. In every instance, the conquest by the might of the Soviet empire was enacted as though a seizure of power by a native party had taken place. The elaborate preparatory game in the forties when first, prior to full bolshevization, several parties were tolerated and then liquidated in favor of a one-party dictatorship, served to fortify the illusion of independent domestic developments. What Moscow did was to create exact replicas not only of its own form of government but of the developments which had led up to it. In order to make sure that the development would not lead in an "incorrect" direction, it took care even at the time of Popular Front tactics to reserve the Ministry of Interior for Communists, thus remaining in control of the police, which had been set up *in nucleo* by Soviet police units accompanying the occupation army. The police was organized in orthodox totali-

tarian fashion, an elite spy group within the police charged with informing on the ordinary members of the police who in turn informed on the party-members and the population at large. The bolshevization of the country was introduced through the same show trials of prominent party members we know from Russia, while here, too, the less prominent ones were deported to concentration camps, presumably in Russia. From the beginning, moreover, this police spy net was duplicated by a similar organization established by the Russian army, and the only distinction between the two competing bodies was "that they served different masters within one Soviet oligarchy." This duplication and multiplication of offices is also in line with orthodox totalitarian institutions. And like its model in Russia, the police in the satellite countries kept "cadre-cards" for every citizen in the country, on which presumably not only compromising information was recorded, but information on associations, friends, family, and acquaintances which is much more valuable for totalitarian terror.

Yet, while the police was set up in strict accordance with the Russian model, the device of creating replicas and staffing them with native personnel was not followed. This was the only institution in which Russian advisers did not stay in the background but openly supervised the natives and even ran the show trials. Something similar seems now to be happening to the satellite armies, which after the Hungarian uprising are under command of Russian officers, but while this military control is clearly a reaction against unforeseen developments, the control of the police was planned as though the Russian rulers thought that everything would follow automatically once this most important device of total domination had set the mechanism into motion. There is, how-

ever, another rather inconspicuous but not uninteresting difference between the Russian and the satellite system, which concerns the method of selecting rank and file members of the police. Here, too, the Russians had to fall back upon experiences in the early stages of totalitarian rule and rely upon criminal and otherwise compromised elements in the population. This stands in stark contrast to the system the Russians have been practicing for more than twenty-five years now, in which the police appoints its new members from the rank and file of the party and even from the population at large. The point is that members of the NKVD are drafted into police service in almost the same way as all citizens are drafted into military service. This flaw in reproduction obviously is caused by the time lag in totalitarian development we mentioned above; in the satellite countries the police is still an "elite" body in the original sense of the word, whose members are chosen according to characteristics which distinguish them not only from the ordinary citizen but also from the ordinary party member.

Up to now, this time element has thwarted Moscow's attempts to create exact replicas of the Russian government in the satellite countries. We do not know whether this time lag would have become so dangerously noticeable if the succession crisis after Stalin's death had not pushed all developments in uncalculated directions. At any event, it was at that moment that the facsimile character of the satellite governments, with its slavish imitation of the Moscow masters, took its revenge. For the destalinization period and the succession crisis, which did not create major disturbances in Russia proper, had their most dangerous consequences in those countries, Poland and Hungary, which followed Russia once more most obedi-

ently, while Rumania and Albania and even Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, where the Stalinists had succeeded in keeping power against the Moscow trend, remained quiet and loyal.

It is chiefly this difference in reaction to developments in Russia which explains certain diversities of present conditions in the satellite countries, and this diversity is due to certain failures of totalitarian imperialism; it does not indicate a new, more promising stage in its development. The seriousness of these failures is best gauged by the number of Soviet divisions stationed in the satellite countries—28 garrisons are still needed to occupy Hungary while Hungarian soldiers, now commanded directly by Russian officers, can still not be trusted with weapons, and the situation is hardly much better elsewhere. The presence of Russian troops, though legalized by the Warsaw pact which could conveniently be modelled on NATO, may help to destroy the illusion of independence for the sake of which the whole system was devised and which in itself even disregarding all other atrocities, constitute a worse hypocrisy than any committed by imperialist Europe in its colonial rule. Sitting on bayonets is not only an old-fashioned and rather uncomfortable device of domination, it is a serious setback to totalitarian aspirations which had hoped to be able to keep the satellites in the Moscow orbit by the sheer force of ideology and terror. It remains to be seen whether these setbacks will be able to break the spell of attraction this system exerts in Asia and Africa, that is, in all regions whose political and emotional life is still tuned to the reaction against an older imperialism where foreigners openly assumed power. Unfortunately, these people, without much experience in politics in general and in modern politics in particular, are only too easy to fool; they

will conclude that whatever this is, it is not imperialism as they knew it, and whatever the faults of the regime may be, the principle of racial equality is not violated. This is not likely to change so long as the former colonial people are color conscious instead of freedom minded.

However that may be, the failures of totalitarian imperialism should be taken no less seriously than the successes of Soviet technicians and engineers. But neither the failures of 1956 nor the successes of 1957 indicate a new development of this form of government within, either in the direction of enlightened despotism or some other form of dictatorship. If the dramatic events of the Hungarian Revolution demonstrate any-

thing, it is at best the dangers which may grow out of the lawlessness and formlessness inherent in the very dynamics of this regime and so glaringly apparent in its inability to solve the succession problem. If these danger signs promise anything at all, it is much rather a sudden and dramatic collapse of the whole regime than a gradual normalization. Such a catastrophic development, as we learned from the Hungarian Revolution, need not necessarily entail chaos—though it certainly would be rather unwise to expect from the Russian people, after forty years of tyranny and thirty years of totalitarianism, the same spirit and the same political productivity which the Hungarian people showed in their most glorious hour.

LIMITING WAR *(Continued from page 101)*

Whatever action individual Christians may, or may not, think it appropriate to take, at all events, they should insist on the people being given now sufficient facts to enable the public conscience to wrestle with the tremendous

moral issues at stake. We need to know the facts not merely when we are threatened, but also during the long-term preparations beforehand, which will largely commit us, in advance, to the action we take in a crisis.

THE LANTERN

A play in one act

GABRIEL MARCEL

Persons

Antonin Chavière
Raymond Chavière
Isabelle
Sabine Verdon
Madame Andrézy

The scene is set at the house of Raymond Chavière, in a large well-lighted room which is both bedroom and study. Along the wall at the left, a divan. At the back, two windows overlooking a somber street. At the right, near the window, a door leading to the drawing room. Along the wall at the right, a bookcase. A desk is placed before the window at the left.

SCENE I

CHAVIÈRE, MME ANDRÉZY

MME ANDRÉZY. Monsieur Raymond will surely not be long. If Monsieur will take the trouble of waiting... Won't Monsieur give me his overcoat? It is very warm for the season.

Gabriel Marcel, one of the most distinguished names in modern philosophy, is known in the United States for his METAPHYSICAL JOURNAL (Regnery), BEING AND HAVING (Beacon), and THE MYSTERY OF BEING (Regnery). The importance of his plays in the development of his thought, as well as their interest in their own right, has been too long neglected. An attentive reader will be able to discover persistent Marcelian themes even in this one-act play.

Secker and Warburg (London) has published a volume of THREE PLAYS using translations commissioned for the B.B.C.

CHAVIÈRE. Thank you. (*He takes off his overcoat.*)

MME ANDRÉZY (*taking it from his hands*). I will put it in the anteroom...

CHAVIÈRE. Has it been a long time since you entered the service of Madame... Parmentier?

MME A. It will be two years at the beginning of next month... Poor Madame! Who would have thought that of the two of us she would be the one to go first?

C. Madame Parmentier always had delicate health.

MME A. And yet she remained always active, always out of doors... When I was first here it seemed to me that Madame could hardly stay in one place... Where I was before the two ladies thought only of coddling themselves. Before ten in the morning no moving a piece of furniture. There were times when they didn't ring before eleven. While Madame was always up at seven o'clock, a quarter to seven, so as not to be late for mass.

C. Madame Parmentier went to mass every morning?

MME A. Except at the last, when she scarcely left her chaise longue.

C. And... Monsieur Raymond usually accompanied her to church?

MME A. On Sundays... only on Sundays... Heavens! During the week, with his work, his examinations to prepare, it would be too much to ask... I am pious, Monsieur, but I don't find it the thing for gentlemen to be always wrapped up in the church... If my husband would just consent to make his Easter duty I would be quite content. But he is so obstinate... (*A silence.*)

C. My son... he hasn't been shaken up too much by...

MME A. (*disconcerted*). I beg Monsieur's pardon...

C. I am Monsieur Raymond's father...

MME A. (*confused*). Ah!... oh!... I didn't understand... as Monsieur never came here since I was in Madame's service...

C. Quite understandably.

MME A. Naturally I knew that Madame Parmentier was divorced... but I did not suspect... It is true, however, that Monsieur Raymond resembles you.

C. So it's said.

MME A. And at the same time he is the image of poor Madame... it's odd, nevertheless... Monsieur asked... yes, I find Monsieur Raymond quite exhausted, quite thin... Monsieur will judge... Heavens! He sat up every night. He wouldn't leave the sickroom at night. He was a model son, one must say so—and kind, and attentive. Poor Madame knew happiness with him. When one thinks of the young people nowadays... there are so many who think only of amusing themselves. Sports, women. Monsieur Raymond spent every evening near Madame, reading to her. Since she slept badly she did not like to lie down early. Sometimes even till midnight, one o'clock... Ah! but I hear Monsieur Raymond coming in... Monsieur won't have long to wait.

SCENE II

THE SAME, RAYMOND

RAYMOND (*entering from the back*). Hello, father.

C. (*with restrained emotion*). My son...

RAYMOND. I hope you weren't waiting for me too long.

C. I've just arrived. (*To Mme A., who discreetly withdraws.*) Goodby, Madame. (*Madame A. gently closes the door behind her.*) It's true that you have a sallow face, my poor fellow.

R. And you—that grippe?

C. That's finished. But since my attack two years ago I am always obliged to be careful. Otherwise you may be sure I would have jumped on the train...

R. Yes.

C. You don't think so? To me this has been... a great blow. Believe me. I knew that your poor mother had been given up. But I never would have thought... Did she suffer?

R. It is difficult to say. I do not believe she had great pain... Except perhaps one or two days just before the end. But she felt herself become weaker and weaker, more and more miserable. With certain anxieties... It is almost worse than suffering, because nothing can be done... In any case, even in other circumstances, if morphine had been proposed to her she would have refused.

C. What folly! (*A silence.*) Did she die conscious?

R. Yes.

C. Atrocious... I will ask nothing of you, be sure. You understand, my son, all this is... She didn't... I scarcely dare ask the question... she... it might have happened... she didn't give you a message for me?...

R. (*in a neutral voice*). None.

C. (*to himself*). It's hard.

R. You said?...

C. Nothing. (*A silence.*)

R. (*politely*). Your wife is well?

C. Isabelle is perfectly well, thank you.

R. She is still at Biarritz?

C. No, no, she insisted on coming back with me. She takes good care... she wouldn't have let me make the trip alone.

R. She carried off new laurels this summer?

C. Laurels?

R. In golf...

C. It's the last time she will enter the tournament. She promised me herself.

R. She isn't going to try to beat her own record?

C. No... (*A silence.*) You will come to lunch one of these days?

R. When you wish.

C. Isabelle asked me to say...

R. She wrote to me.

C. I wanted to ask you... I do not know where she is buried.

R. At Andilly. She wanted to lie near her sister... In fact, father, if something ever happens to me, I'd like to be buried there too.

C. What an idea! At your age!

R. Can one know? My friend Gessner was carried off the other day with the flu.

C. I beg you, son, take care. Haven't you imposed too much on your strength in undertaking this heavy task?... And besides, you haven't had a vacation. This person who keeps house for you...

R. Madame Andrézy.

C. Does she care for you well?

R. She waits on me hand and foot.

C. No, there is no reason that this should go on.

R. What?

C. I mean... this situation. This apartment is awfully depressing.

R. We have sun all afternoon.

C. It's not a question of exposure. I always found it depressing. Personally I never could get used to it. We moved in for want of a better at a time when nothing could be found. I was very surprised when your mother insisted on keeping it after the divorce. Especially since it's very large. And at present...

R. Mother liked it very much.

C. I must believe so... Besides, your mother was a bit insensitive to what I would call atmosphere. She would have been capable of living in a hotel for years without suffering. But though I had to submit to such a regime for so long I have never been able to adapt myself to it.

R. (*in a detached tone*). Life is not well ordered.

C. However it may be, you cannot think of... Look, my son, there is one thing I insist on saying to you just now, yes, without waiting till you've found again... Besides, I know you; I can measure, believe me, the void your mother's passing must have left for you... Whatever our dissension may have been... anyway the word is inexact; we didn't have any dissension. I did not cease to have for her...

R. All this is hardly worth saying.

C. Perhaps not... but it is a need that I am experiencing. It seems easier for me to speak of her with you now that she is no longer here. Formerly, you understand, I had somewhat the impression that she was a third person between us. It was...

R. You breathe easier now that she has left me!

C. Raymond!... I always cherished the hope that one day she and I, before leaving this world, could come to an understanding...

R. Probably she would not have allowed it.

C. Why not? (*A silence.*)

R. Besides, I suppose that you said everything to each other... at that time.

C. It seems to me today that we exchanged only false words... Your mother, in any case, was not... She was inclined... I never knew what she was thinking... Ultimately I believe that I did not know her. Apparently she became very pious at the end?

R. Who told you that?

C. Madame Andrézy... It is so natural, in fact; when one knows oneself menaced...

R. (*harshly*). Mother was brave. (*A silence.*)

C. She knew that she was going to leave you alone: she expressed no desire?... She could not have wished you

to stay here... I'm sure, on the contrary, that she would have found it quite natural that you come to live with us. There is a room waiting for you, my boy; I long to have you installed there. I've the right to say it to you now; I've missed you very much. I've suffered to see you so rarely and so unhappily. Oh! I incriminate no one, note it well. No, but circumstances did not lend themselves to the intimacy that I wished for.

R. And now? (*A silence.*) Besides, I don't quite understand. The summer I spent with you before my military service, I did not see that you made the least effort to let us establish true contact.

C. Three weeks, my son, does that count for so much?... I had had for several years, rightly or wrongly, the very clear impression that you accepted my second marriage with difficulty. I could not even know whether your mother had not caused you... In the time to which you allude, up to the last moment I was afraid that there was not room...

R. Yes... But today I must tell you something which in every way would make it difficult... I am engaged.

C. You engaged? Since when?

R. (*without answering*). My fiancée should in fact be coming here at any moment, I will present her to you.

C. It's incredible... Who is it?

R. A young woman whom I knew at the Sorbonne, whom I saw again at the winter sports in the month of January.

C. A young woman?

R. Yes.

C. She is a widow?

R. Divorced.

C. What is her name?

R. Sabine Verdon. She took her maiden name again, of course.

C. I know that name. But wait... Where did I hear her spoken of quite recently? Was it at Biarritz?

R. No matter.

C. Now I have it... Isabelle played golf with her first husband.

R. (*dryly*). It's possible.

C. Olivier Guérin.

R. (*as before*). And what of it?

C. My boy, I beg you, be on guard. That sort...

R. What sort?

C. Olivier Guérin's sort.

R. I can assure you that Sabine no longer sees him.

C. All the same, he has been in her life for...

R. Three years and a half.

C. I am not saying that he is a scoundrel, please understand...

R. (*nervous*). That gentleman is of no concern to me.

C. Can you be sure? I don't know, I had hoped that you...

R. You are concerned about my marriage?

C. First of all, my son, I wonder whether it would not have been wiser to wait a few years. I am not referring to your material situation. With what your mother left you and what I can myself give you...

R. I beg you, father...

C. And then the day when you will be made professor... Besides she herself must have some fortune.

R. (*with secret satisfaction*). She is very nearly ruined.

C. Ah!... You make me lose my thread. I wished to say... You've had such a serious youth, so protected... Oh! it's very fine... but I can't keep from thinking... To embark on life with no experience of women... I could cite cases to you.

R. Really, father...

C. It's strange. What you've just told me causes me deep concern.

R. I don't understand... As far as I can judge, Sabine will please you immediately. (*A shake of the head from Chavière.*)

C. And of course your mother knew and approved of this project?

R. (*in a changed voice*). Why do you ask me that?

C. I am astonished. Since she had become so pious... a divorced daughter-in-law...

R. In any case, so far as you are concerned there are no religious motives...

C. I am more and more struck by the profound social sense which the regulations of the Church contain.

R. Ah?

C. This is without relationship to faith, which unfortunately was not given me... But your mother... Was the marriage of the Guérins then purely civil? (*Raymond does not answer.*) I'm asking you whether their marriage was purely civil.

R. They belonged to a set in which the religious ceremony is *de rigueur*. The ceremony.

C. You mean?

R. A simple form.

C. But the sacrament, my son? ... I didn't know that the Church ever considered the intention, the interior disposition...

R. This is the first time you've given evidence of theological rigorism.

C. I'm thinking of your mother, Raymond. I can't successfully explain to myself how a woman so devout... But it is clear that you don't want to discuss this subject with me. And that is entirely natural. I would have liked to be sure... Formerly I often noticed that she was rarely mistaken about people. There were even cases where I saw her demonstrate a real sixth sense... (*A silence.*) However, it may be... You might, all the same, not have confronted me with a *fait accompli* so unconcernedly. Oh! I thoroughly understand that today people no longer consult their parents. It has created such a gulf between the generations since the war.

R. So they say.

C. But it is certain, under these conditions, that my idea is now hardly possible... However... while you wait... You will be engaged for some time, I imagine.

R. As little as possible. There is something so false, so artificial about engagements.

C. We remained betrothed more than a year, your mother and I. I treasure the memory of that period...

R. Did the long engagement teach you to know each other?...

C. My boy... No, it is too late. Already too late... If it wouldn't cause you painful feelings, which I would understand, I would like to be alone for a moment in the little room where your mother...

R. Just as you wish.

(*He half-opens the door at the right; Chavière, who has risen, takes several steps toward the room, then stops on the threshold. At this moment Sabine enters from the back; Raymond makes a sign to her, to which she responds with a questioning look.*)

SCENE III

THE SAME, SABINE

(*A silence.*)

C. (*turning around still without having seen Sabine*). I remember so well the day when for the last time we... (*Noticing Sabine.*) Ah!...

R. I present my fiancée, father.

C. Madame, I have only just learned... you must excuse me, you see... this room... you can hardly imagine... (*He kisses Sabine's hand; she seems a little stunned.*)

SABINE. I am myself very much moved.

C. We must hope that life for you... All is unknown, all unforeseeable. But I am one of those who still believe that a great emotion...

R. The future does not terrify us, does it, Sabine? (*Sabine gestures.*)

S. The future! It is difficult enough to manage the present.

C. What do you mean, Madame?

S. It overwhelms us on all sides.

R. I don't feel like that.

S. It's as if one were reduced to camping in a corner of an immeasurably vast house where everything is in the greatest disorder. But I rather like this unsettled atmosphere. It tricks you, but it's curious...

C. The simplest thing will be for you to come to lunch together with us one of these days.

R. You can have someone telephone, if you like.

S. I don't have my datebook.

(*Raymond makes a gesture of guiding Chavière.*)

C. No need, my boy, I know the way. (*He goes out after bowing to Sabine.*)

SCENE IV

RAYMOND, SABINE

S. Your father seemed quite stricken.

R. Yes... I don't know. (*A silence.*)

S. How's everything with you? Sleep well?

R. Fairly.

S. You should listen to me. A change of air would do you good. Only a few days. I don't know where myself; at Lyons-la-Forêt, at Andelys.

R. All alone...

S. I say again, I would go with you. What is it that displeases you in my plan?

R. Nothing. I don't know. It's very tempting.

S. What a tone you use!

R. I think I would still have a great deal of trouble in... (*He gestures to indicate the neighboring room.*)

S. But good sense demands that you make a little effort... Some weeks ago, in fact, your mother worried herself be-

cause you hadn't had a vacation. You told me so. She would have liked to send you to your friends at Allier.

R. Everything is different.

S. Easier. Isn't it?...

R. Not entirely.

S. I don't understand.

R. It's not important.

S. Your father's visit has shaken you, obviously.

R. That would be natural.

S. Raymond, darling, you should try to overcome these reactions. He made a new life for himself.

R. He believed he did.

S. He found himself for the first time in years in this house...

R. Thanks. I understood.

S. Please understand that he was grateful to himself in the moment of his emotion, that he marvelled at his own sensitivity.

R. How do you know about that, Sabine?

S. He's a known type. My father-in-law was like that; I remember that at the death of his wife he had all sorts of delusions...

R. My father was not having a delusion... I think he's unhappy.

S. You are sad, my darling, and your mood colors all your thoughts.

R. As always you are making very subtle observations, but they do me no good... It's fantastic; I have an idea he will follow her before long.

S. A premonition?

R. Instead of going with you to Lyons-la-Forêt...

S. Yes?

R. I wonder whether I won't go to stay with him for a few weeks, as he asked me.

S. He... this is news.

R. Oh! I refused.

S. And so?

R. But I don't know, it's as though he left behind him...

S. Well?

R. Don't laugh.

S. I'm not laughing at all, Raymond... What I say, in any case, is that you can do nothing that would be more disagreeable to me.

R. How does this concern you?

S. I suppose that his wife is in Paris?

R. She came back with him this morning.

S. Well, you see.

R. Not at all.

S. She was Olivier's great flirt.

R. Ah! And then what?

S. There were even people who pretended...

R. I still don't see...

S. And they didn't dissuade me of the idea...

R. What are you hinting at, Sabine?

S. Your step-mother is ravishing.

R. My step-mother? Ah! Isabelle... I've never thought of her as a step-mother.

S. But just now... (*Raymond makes a tense movement.*) Your father is almost an old man. I observed him two or three years ago. He seemed to me so changed just a while ago.

R. He spent the night on the train. And then emotion, whatever you may say...

S. He had the look, in fact, of being his own father. I am going to say something which may astonish you, but I am sure of not being mistaken. Believe me, his household will not survive your mother's death.

R. Sabine!

S. Remember that I knew Isabelle before her marriage, when we went to school at the Louvre. There wasn't such a difference in age...

R. I know.

S. She had an unlimited admiration for your mother. And I am convinced that otherwise she would have paid no attention to your father.

R. That isn't common sense.

S. You yourself told me... That time you stayed with your parents in the Pyrenees... She was in the same hotel...

R. No one could come near mother without admiring her.

S. You see... Without the sort of rivalry, of jealousy that she immediately aroused in Isabelle... Think, Raymond. A fifty-year-old administrator. There are more exciting things. Your father was "a gentleman, well-off, a member of the Club des Sans, commander of the Legion of Honor"...

R. An officer.

S. No matter. It all allows one to suppose that Isabelle, after having... carried off this rather questionable victory, was desperate... And besides, everyone who met her in the last few years was struck with her sadness, her strained manner.

R. I never noticed anything like that. I always found her very gay, though it was a rather artificial gaiety.

S. In your presence she had to put on a bold face. As long as your mother was alive, there could be no question of Isabelle's recovering her freedom.

R. Why not?

S. Why, it's perfectly clear. She made it a point of honor to demonstrate to the one whose place she had taken that she was a perfect companion for Antonin Chavière.

R. That's make-believe.

S. You can't honestly say so. Isabelle is a creature made for love. Can you believe for a single moment?...

R. I believe nothing. I've never stopped thinking...

S. Darling Raymond, you don't really mean what you say.

R. It's absolutely false. You're forgetting that for years I saw my father for a few weeks every two years, when he came home on leave, since we couldn't follow him to the colonies because of

mother's health. The divorce wounded me for her sake—only for her.

S. And she herself, we'll never know exactly what she thought of it.

R. We don't have to know.

S. I agree. As far as I'm concerned, if your father has come not to suggest to you, but to beseech you to come and live with them, it is probably because he has become aware that his happiness is in danger, and that your presence near Isabelle would be able—oh, how can one know? I don't mean anything awful—quite simply to put an element of interest in her life which is now terribly absent.

R. I have never heard the like of that.

S. But there is no reason for your father to be aware of that. (*A silence*) How far away you are today! I have felt it since I came in.

R. My father was here.

S. But after he left.

R. It can't be helped. There is a thought which has become more and more unbearable to me.

S. What is it?

R. What's the use? It's something on which we don't understand each other. And since nothing about it can be changed any more... or at least...

S. It concerns your mother? Your mother and me?... I was sure of it.

R. It is a subject that is worth avoiding.

S. Just the same, it's for this reason that you don't want to come with me to Andelys. (*A gesture from Raymond*) You admit it?

R. I don't know.

S. What an answer!

R. I assure you... What I see clearly is that if we are alone together somewhere, there will inevitably occur what just missed happening at Nancroix in January.

S. (*laughing*). Occur, happening... your words are unbelievable. People

would think you were speaking of a skiing or motorcycle accident... Your expression just now was so childish... like a little boy five years old. Yes, you reminded me of Etienne, my ex-nephew.

R. You talk so much about his family.

S. Etienne is the only one whom I liked—and since he was only 6½ you really don't have any reason to be jealous.

R. (*with growing bitterness*). Who said anything about jealousy?... Besides, if you had, I don't know, the least sense of elementary decency, you would understand that your tone just now, those allusions, that laugh... You're happy enough now, rather relieved, you too! No more precautions, no more elaborate arrangements. One can devote oneself to the present now, and call up at all hours of the day and night. The good life begins.

S. Raymond!

R. It seems to me sometimes that death is like an immense weakness that could be deceived without pity and without shame. There is no longer anything to fear from it. No more quarrels to avoid, no more scenes, no more explanations. Nothing will survive, so—we can give ourselves to each other...

S. (*in a changed voice*). In that case, Raymond... you despise me!

R. Not you, it is us that I despise. Especially myself. If you only knew... It was so easy. She was there. She was completely conscious. I could have spoken to her. She almost asked me to. Yes, one night, nearly a month ago, she mentioned your name. She wanted to say: is it true that... There was a fear in her eyes. A fear. A fear. And then I pretended not to understand. "Sabine Verdon? A friend—very intelligent. Perhaps a little heartless." I said that to reassure her.

S. Is that what you thought, Raymond?

R. One thinks as one pleases. At that moment I was glad to find that phrase which reassured her. To say "perhaps a little heartless" about a woman, that was clear proof that one had no idea... My poor mother... And the next day she told me, "You don't know how well I slept..."

S. She was very sick... What good would it have done to worry her? You showed yourself to be considerate, that's all. You have nothing with which to reproach yourself. Especially towards the end she had very narrow ideas.

R. She believed, that's all.

S. You're right; one can hardly call that ideas... On the whole, if anyone has the right to be angry with you, it seems to me that it would be me... And I wouldn't dream of being angry.

R. Everything has worked out so well... All that was needed was a little patience. Very little. You will be fair enough with her to admit that she didn't overdo it. She left on time. Just as she lived... She was always precise. She hated to make anyone wait. When we were to meet somewhere... she always got there first. Her smile welcomed me... Her smile, it was someone; I will never see it again... And then, I who hate to lie, who had never lied to her, I could deceive her... because I knew she was going to die. The thought of her death was there like the beam of a lantern. When she left, I would reach port. And you too, you used to watch for that flickering light. You used to calculate, you measured out the minutes—we're getting closer... ah, there's the light at the end of the jetty... the houses, the hotel... like that evening when she and I disembarked at Amalfi. It was that trip which took so much out of her and which she insisted on giving me after my graduation.

S. Listen to me, Raymond, you've just hurt me... I can't even tell you... but I understand, believe me... I'm not angry with you. It's certainly not your fault. In a little while, when you are alone, you will get hold of yourself again, I'm sure of it... and we will never allude again—neither of us—to these cruel words that have been spoken. What I said just before, when your father was here... you see, it's true to such an extent... you too are camping in a little corner, under a threadbare shawl, between a cage and a pendulum that has been stopped.

R. Sabine, you are a dreadful woman. (*There is a knock*) Who's there?

MME ANDRÉZY (*from outside*). It is Mme Chavière, who asked to see Monsieur Raymond.

R. Madame...

S. It's Isabelle. You ought to say that you are too tired, Raymond.

R. Not at all. Have the lady come in.

SCENE V

THE SAME, THEN ISABELLE

R. (*to Sabine*) It is probable that she doesn't know anything yet. In that case... (*At that moment Isabelle enters, goes to Raymond, and embraces him.*)

ISABELLE. My dear Raymond!

R. (*indicating Sabine*). I believe that you know each other.

I. (*astonished*). Why certainly. (*To Sabine.*) It's been ages since we've met... Believe me, what a frightful thing!... I don't know any details yet. Your father came a little while ago?

R. Yes, he stayed a minute with me.

I. I don't want to make you go through it all again... it's too painful. And besides, all these details which surround death, they must be forgotten... it is a duty toward those who are no longer. If they could, they would be the first to ask us.

S. Surely.

I. There's no doubt of it. I remember that the last conscious gesture of my poor father was to show us the photograph that had been taken of him ten years earlier. He was a magnificent man. (*To Sabine, indicating Raymond.*) You knew Elizabeth well?

S. A little...

I. A marvelous being. Life is idiotic, my dear Raymond. When I think that we never saw each other again during all those years... Yes, I did see her one day at the Conservatory, I remember; she was wearing her fur cape. How lovely she was! If only I had dared to take the initiative! But I was afraid... Naturally she couldn't begin... What a mess we make of living.

S. Fortunately you can say that in a light tone. Goodby, Raymond. You will telephone me this evening, won't you? I won't go out. I am counting on it...

R. Goodby, Sabine. (*Sabine leaves.*)

SCENE VI

RAYMOND, ISABELLE

I. (*astonished*). Aren't you going to show her out?

R. She knows the way; she has been here often.

I. How odd. I didn't know you were so close... Imagine, I was all tied up with Olivier Guérin at Biarritz. Charming boy. She said bad things about him?

R. Not at all.

I. Why did they get married, those two? Why were they divorced? One does not need to look far to understand. But Olivier is really somebody, that much is certain. He's going to go into politics. Quite a leftist, you know. He has very bold ideas.

R. Do they cost him a lot?

I. What do you mean, my dear Raymond?

R. Those opinions, in these days, are accepted easily enough.

I. But why do you want...?

R. I don't want anything. But you were speaking of boldness; that generally means courage.

I. Well after all, he was a pilot in Morocco.

R. That's something quite different.

I. At bottom you're a complete reactionary, Raymond.

R. That's the way it is.

I. At your age, I don't find it very chic. Such opinions are for old men. I don't mean your father. He has always had a maddeningly prudent disposition. Listen, Raymond; I came here to speak to you about him. How did you find him?... I will not hide from you the fact that I am not very happy. I would like him to have a thorough examination, but you know how he is—a mule... Besides, I think that on that point... (*She makes a small gesture in his direction.*) Perhaps you would be able to convince him. I have no great influence over him. No, no, I assure you... But that is not all: even before we got this news, which gave him a real shock, I found him sad, apathetic, a little... how should I tell you? He is a man who used to like a lot of conversation. But now, when he is with a friend, he lets the thread drop, you understand; we always have to get the talk started all over again.

R. And to what do you attribute this?

I. It is difficult to say. It is very probable that I am not exactly the woman that he needed. Yes, my dear Raymond, I am aware of it, and am not ashamed to say it. Consider—all sorts of little things. He has always adored chess, especially since he has been living in the country. But it gives me a headache. Oh, for a half hour or so, all right. But after that I stop paying attention, he wins too easily, and that annoys him. His eyes have been tired for some time;

his oculist gave him very strong glasses and advised him not to read for more than an hour or two a day at the most. For a man who has so much free time, that's not enough. But I can't read to him, I get hoarse too quickly. Besides, it's not good for me. That's what they told me when I was at the hospital last year. We tried to find a student who would read to him. But it was difficult. Besides, I noticed that this saddened him; he had the feeling that he was being left to be cared for by a paid outsider. He made me feel it...

R. What then?

I. Listen to me carefully, Raymond. I know that your father has one idea which is especially dear to him. I don't suppose he has spoken of it to you yet, and yet it would be so natural.

R. (*reserved*). He started to say something to me... But in turn I had an announcement to make to him which he had not expected. Sabine Verdon and I are engaged.

S. Sabine? It's not possible.

R. I shall ask you immediately, even if this decision surprises you, to refrain from any comment on this subject. I know you are on very good terms with Olivier Guérin.

I. But Raymond...

R. You said so yourself. It is likely enough that during a golf match he has found pleasure in confiding in you... oh, I don't know what, it doesn't matter. Whatever you know, or whatever you think you know, don't persuade yourself that you have any duty to inform me, or place me on guard... That would simply create an extremely painful situation between us.

I. But I have never dreamed...

R. I was only trying to warn you. A word, an irreparable phrase, is so quickly pronounced. Very likely we will be called upon to see each other more often than in the past...

I. (*feebly*). No.

R. (*who hasn't heard*)... Since I will be under an obligation to give more attention to my father. What you have just told me proves it. I don't know yet what I will do. We should be able to find someone for him... a secretary who would be able to distract him, and help him keep his mind busy. I will look around. At the Sorbonne, among the students... perhaps not a foreigner, because of the accent... but with all the unemployment...

I. You go on talking, I can hardly stop you. Raymond, I see that I haven't made you understand. The truth is that I am at the end of my rope, you understand. I can no longer conceal from myself that our marriage has been a madness beyond words.

R. Is it only today that you perceive this?

I. It is only today that I have the right and the duty to say it. The words that I used just before, speaking of the one you have lost, I would like to cry them aloud, Raymond. A marvelous being.

R. Watch out, Isabelle.

I. When I try to understand what took place formerly, I can never get to the end of it. I ask myself if there are not some people in life who are simply spoilers. Yes, dear Raymond, spoilers. I think I have been one of them. And not only me. My responsibilities are enormous. Especially at this time, and in this house, I would not think of minimizing them. Your father...

R. Please, I beg of you...

I. It is far from my intention to address the least reproach to him. Don't you see, the misfortune in his life was to have married a woman who was—yes, let's say it—too superior. As long as his profession allowed him to pass the larger part of his time outside of France, there was no

catastrophe. But when he returned to establish himself here...

R. I have no interest in these retrospective surveys.

I. Let us admit that all the wrongs are my doing—which is not true—I can't stand living with your father any longer. I will only be able to make him more unhappy. Already at Biarritz, there have been scenes which I could not even describe... And there we still had friends, who were constantly around us.

R. You don't know anyone here?

I. Your father has told me that he doesn't want to entertain this winter.

R. I imagine that you will remain free to visit where you please.

I. But what a face I'll find when I get home! What silences there will be! And not only silences, but sighs and tears... You can't imagine the complaints I get. As if I had destroyed him. Positively monstrous!

R. And you think that if I consented to his desire...

I. Raymond dear, life would be transformed; it is as simple as that.

R. For whom?

I. For him, for me...

R. I don't understand.

I. Let us say, if you wish, that it is a matter of going round a dangerous cape. All alone we will not succeed... But now, this engagement of yours... If only one could be happy about it...

R. Remember what I told you, Isabelle.

I. It's not what Olivier told me. That gentleman is extremely discreet. Occasionally sharp, a trifle malicious. That's hardly the point. But there are those who were familiar with the Guérin household.

R. I'm sure this will be pretty...

I. Did you know that she had an abortion?

R. (*very dryly*). I hadn't heard... Let us suppose for a second, which more-

over is possible, that my marriage might not take place till next year... and that, to get by this cape, I might come to spend a few months with my father?...

I. My dear Raymond... it is quite simple: you would save me from myself.

R. How?

I. I have not told you everything. You must not be able to suppose for a second... ah, it is frightful. I don't even dare imagine what we will think when we recall this conversation. But I have sworn to myself that with you I will not allow myself to be intimidated by simple conventions.

R. I don't see what all these circumlocutions refer to. I am quite prepared to understand that you are on extremely close terms with Olivier Guérin.

I. That is not true.

R. (*indifferent*). Oh?

I. If it were only up to him...

R. And he's such a charming young man, very courageous, and all filled with revolutionary opinions, I haven't forgotten.

I. You are not very nice, Raymond; you are not helping me... I would have thought grief would have made you more understanding.

R. Ah, that too... Obviously everything in this situation must fill your desires.

I. (*who has not paid attention*). He loves me, I don't doubt it. And, after all... the sweet things that he has said to me, I have never heard them before. Or at any rate it was such a long time ago... Do you see, perhaps it is shameful to be as I am. But I know myself, Raymond; I don't have any illusions about myself. If you abandon me...

R. What?

I. I must tell you that he has asked me to go with him to the Far East. He has been given a government post in Japan... I have always dreamed of visiting those countries... I will not be

able to resist. What would you want? ... Life is so short, Raymond. Your mother had the faith; it is a marvelous gift. I ... I lost it before my first communion. I have never refound it. If one is not lifted up beyond oneself, how is one able ... I don't understand ...

R. Nevertheless, Isabelle, up to the present you seem to have managed.

I. That wasn't the same thing.

R. Why?

I. Besides, I tell you again he has changed so much in the last few months. Of course it's terrible to tell all this to you. But you aren't like the others. I have often noticed it. In the beginning, sometimes, I used to think you were not very kind to him. Always full of reserve. Later I understood better. It has been difficult for you ... He has, after all, spoiled your youth. (*movement of Raymond.*) He has ... we have. (*Silence.*)

R. Will you allow me to ask you a question, Isabelle? A very simple question.

I. Speak.

R. You used an extraordinary word a moment ago. A word which escaped you. I am sure you don't even remember saying it. Just a little phrase: "if you abandon me." I thought that it was my father you were asking me not to abandon.

I. But ... of course.

R. Is it for my father or for you that you are asking me to come and live in the house on Marignan Avenue?

I. My poor Raymond, your question is pointless, believe me. Or rather ... I am on the verge of making a decision ... I know that I risk regretting it all my life.

R. In the name of heaven, how is it in my power to prevent you?

I. (*bursting into tears*). Those leisurely suppers when you used to talk to me so seriously ... You cannot imagine ...

To have someone young near you ... I am very fond of you, Raymond. And I feel I am in debt to you ... I would like ... I would like ... you are going to be so lonely! I know you're not going to marry Sabine Verdon, I know it, you understand. Then, to be near you ... to put a little sweetness in your life ... I am not demanding, that would suffice ... It would transform my life. And your poor father ... old age, Raymond, is a frightful thing. (*Raymond makes a gesture to cut her short.*)

R. You are asking me to act disgracefully, Isabelle ... Yes, yes, I know it. You say that you know yourself. Well, right now I too, I'm afraid, I know myself. You were not wrong before; it is quite probable that I will not marry Sabine Verdon. I can no longer explain to myself how I could have—or thought I could have loved her. For that it would be necessary ...

I. Your youth was too serious, dear Raymond. I have often said so to your father. When we are not acquainted with life, we make mistakes. It's inevitable. Besides, Sabine is not just anyone: she has beautiful eyes, and a marvelous figure ...

R. Thank you. You didn't let me finish.

I. (*confused*). Excuse me.

R. If we lived under the same roof, in two months we would be lovers.

I. (*indignant*). You are mad, Raymond. (*A long silence.*)

R. I must seem despicable to you; in fact, I am. Everything you told me was sincere, I don't doubt it for an instant ... Isabelle, I am not judging you. I am sorry for you. At this moment I see with absolute clarity how sad your life has been ... Oh, there have been moments when I hated you. Now I realize that this was absurd, and wrong. A person like my mother—a marvelous person, yes, it is true, Isabelle—is probably

destined to create a great deal of suffering all about her. I do not know why this is so. It is a mystery. You have been one of the paths through which this suffering has flowed. There have been others... I myself, Isabelle. What I am confessing to you at this moment, I have never said to anyone. Between my mother and me there was what is called an absolute intimacy, with moments of tremendous happiness. Moments... But the fear of causing someone like that to suffer through one's own fault, the effort to comply with her desires, to adjust to her dreams, the dread of disappointing her,—and sometimes the resentment, when a difficult sacrifice seemed to be looked upon as natural—the shame of feeling this resentment, the vain attempts to forget it, or have her pardon it if by chance a word or a gesture betrayed it... This forbidden engagement was doubtless, without my even being aware of it, like the revenge of a slave, which I have not even enjoyed. If today you and I had concluded that kind of alliance you proposed to me... I ask your pardon for the cynical words which were such a shock to you. And nevertheless it is the truth. We are very weak, you and I. And she is no longer there to help us. That tenderness which you are all ready to heap upon me, I feel that it would be too easy to pay it back in return. Terribly easy. And if in the past we have won some meager victories over ourselves, I think that at present they would return to work against us. *(a knock at the door)* Who is it?

CHAVIÈRE *(from outside)*. May I come in?

SCENE VII

THE SAME, CHAVIÈRE

R. Is it you, father?

C. Yes, there's something I want to tell you. *(To Isabelle.)* I didn't expect to find you here.

I. I was anxious to see Raymond and convey to him...

C. *(looking at Isabelle)*. Have you been told that...?

I. *(trembling)*. What do you mean?

C. He has informed you of his engagement?

I. Yes, I've been brought up to date; I'm quite pleased... I told Raymond that I was not satisfied with your health, that I found you quite tired. He too believes you should have an examination.

C. We'll talk about it later... *(To Raymond.)* You can't make up your mind on this right now. I don't take kindly to long train trips.

R. That's obvious.

(A silence. Chavière is obviously waiting for Isabelle to go away, but she doesn't budge.)

C. It's late.

R. *(pulling out watch)*. Eight o'clock, but I'm a few minutes fast.

C. *(pointing at reproduction on wall)*. That's lovely, that picture. What is it?

R. The portrait of the Metropolitan by Van der Weyden—it was in the exhibition of Flemish painting.

C. What exhibit have they scheduled for this winter?

R. I don't know.

C. *(who has sat down in front of the desk)*. How low your armchair is! Isn't this a nuisance if you're writing?

R. No, I'm used to it.

C. *(taking a book on the table)*. This big volume, what is it?

R. The new Blondel. I just bought it. See, the pages aren't even cut.

C. Blondel. To me, he's only a name. It appears he's quite important.

R. Very.

C. Could a layman make anything out of his work?

R. There is a volume of selections that has been well edited. I'll pass it on to you.

C. I always distrust selections...

They only let me read an hour or two a day. It's annoying. So I've ignored anything that wasn't really worth some trouble, you understand.

R. Yes, but Blondel...

C. I've never done much with philosophy.

R. That's natural.

C. All the same, before going away, if one could... Because life quite definitely... (*Pointing at the book.*) Does he believe that there is something... after?

R. He is sure of it.

C. So much the better. (*During this time, Isabelle, feeling ignored, has gone out quietly.*)

R. What do you want to say to me, father?

C. (*shielding his eyes behind his hand*). Has Isabelle left?

R. Yes.

C. It's about you—I've just remembered something. But perhaps it's just a trick of my imagination. All the same, it's been bothering me.

R. You mustn't worry yourself so, father.

C. I can't rid myself of the idea that your mother—(*He looks around.*)... Has the wall-paper always been that color. It seemed to me—

R. You're right. It was changed two years ago.

C. Oh, well it's better this way... In fact, I don't know why I told you that I didn't like this apartment. It's quite pleasant in the evening. The rooms are large. You don't hear any noise.

R. I was just on the point of proposing to you... I thought I understood that Isabelle had the desire—she probably didn't dare tell you—of going to spend a fortnight with a friend in the country—the name escapes me.

C. What an idea! She has certainly picked a fine time.

R. She hated to ask you. But this friend was about to leave on a voyage—for India, or Japan.

C. She didn't say a word to me.

R. So then I thought... perhaps it will seem strange to you...

C. What is it, my son?

R. That while Isabelle will be with her friend... you'd come and live here.

C. (*with emotion*). It would be just the two of us.

R. (*gravely*). No, father—the three of us, as before... as always.

translated by

ELIZABETH STAMBLER

and JOSEPH E. CUNNEEN

THE CLOISTER AND THE CITY

reflections on the meaning of obedience today

MARIA TERESA ANTONELLI

HISTORY is for ideas what the ocean is for its shores: an endless prodding. Ever-changing, the sea too ceaselessly belabors the land, traces its contours, ceaselessly submerging things and restoring them to the triumph of the sun, holding the shore in wakefulness. It is a changing and a reassumption. When we call history *magistra vitae*, perhaps we do not so much allude to the fact that it always bears a definite fruit or in any case reveals a hidden fragment of wisdom, but rather we are thinking quite simply of that constant urging, that prodding which renders life alert and therefore fertile.

History is but that fresh necessity which forever besieges man anew. And man adjusts himself to these repeated necessary transitions; this is his life: history, as *dura egestas*, as the pressure of perpetual change. As the shore is battered by the wave, man is battered by "situation," by a historical moment, be it one of ferment or of dull lifelessness; he discovers and rediscovers, loses and tracks down, and thus treads onward, his flesh pricked by the spur of history.

Life never ceases to be revelation: because of this, that which is *dura egestas* as circumstance and situation speaks also in dulcet tones. But more times than not in history, we do not discover: we rediscover. Perhaps being man is just this: arriving at that moment in which

that distant and irrecoverable point which is Infinity draws close once more, the persuaded eye rediscovers daily and forever the countenance of the Father.

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Ever since the year 1000, history has little by little weakened in the consciousness of the Western world the meaning of a word which edified our abbeys, lettered our manuscripts, sowed Europe and the world with silences and fruitful dedication: *obedience*. Solitude for love of God, as soon as it had recognized itself in Basil, became obedience; and when the holy women followed Paul and ministered to him, when his companions assisted him in his preaching, the fervor of a life offered to God revealed itself in the form of obedience. The Middle Ages was built on obedience. It created not only the sacrifice of the cloisters but the respect of civil life for the law, for the word, for custom, constituting in a deformed world the ethos of authority. Due to a *vis dialectica* which is the secret of many human mutations, one of the themes less and less understood as time went on, particularly in its narrowest sense, as a mode of spiritual life, was precisely obedience.

The spirit of modern lay spirituality seems to have swept away not only the roots but the very soil needed for even the slightest residue of the notion and objective reality of obedience. If there is a point on which a dialogue between the Christianity of the cloister and that of the city seems less possible than ever before, it is on the subject of obedience.

The alternating fortunes of the concept of obedience are not restricted, however, to the historical development of

Dr. Antonelli is a professor in the Institute of Philosophy, University of Genoa. Author of a study of Bradley, she is now working on a critical history of American philosophy. She is a regular contributor to HUMANITAS, GIORNALE DI METAFISICA, etc.

Western Christianity. Between Sparta and Athens too there runs a dialogue as to the meaning of obedience as a humanistic value; and in the creed of Socrates, the affirmation of dignity and liberty goes hand in hand with the serene *sub lege* which he pronounces—unchanging and firm to the moment of his absurd surrender of self to the ignoble verdict of the hemlock—in the *Phaedo*, as previously in the *Apology* and the *Crito*. Certainly the essence of obedience is this *esse sub lege* and the first reflection that follows thereupon is firmness in adhesion, a steadfast fixedness in principle and in law. This is the basic and virile aspect of obedience, easier to understand in a lay spirituality; and this is also the aspect which alternately finds a place in lay spirituality, triumphs, and is forgotten. Under the impulse of history, men have often rediscovered what it means to swear a faith and follow it at any cost.

After slandering obedience as pseudo-truth each time it becomes conformism, they have always rediscovered that almost superhuman dignity in the obedience of the man who places himself and holds himself voluntarily *sub lege*. To proceed *sub auctoritate* is to remain materially, not simply formally, *sub lege* and to be invested with a prestige peculiar to men and institutions and customs recognized as standing for an adhesion to a transcendent principle. In ancient Rome, the strongest personalities developed *sub lege*, and the *condottieri* come from the ranks where one moves *ad nutum consulus*. Under Grecian skies, Attic women hasten to obey the will of God, dissolving old vows in the name of a sacred sign, and even the strongest heroes go forth, consenting to the Gods. Wrapped in silence Rome's Vestal Virgins have meaning not so much as shades of a sacrifice whose end is unknown, but rather as the keeping of a pact, the dialogue

with the sacred fire. The barbaric orgy will occur because this hieratic respect of dedicated women, this unyieldingness of men who do not portray their adherence but live it as ready subjection, fades and turns into an object of scorn. It is not law alone which perishes at this point but liberty as well; The capacity to *dominate* and to *create* is also destroyed.

LET US LOOK CLOSELY at this first aspect of obedience—adherence to the law and therefore service of the law, conviction of the value and hence of the supremacy of its exigence and its dictates in each succeeding instance of life—one of the most properly religious, particularly monastic, and typically Christian aspects of obedience. Monastic obedience begins with the *introit* of a sacrifice of every movement of one's own will to the will of others, to that will which, constituted as authoritative for the religious, represents law and value, and becomes with that the rule of his acts. Doubtlessly, this *introit* is fundamental: for the Christian to obey is to remain fixed in that Value to which he adheres and to reiterate that complete adherence, adhering to nothing else. Not to adhere except by command implies that the Christian seeks nothing for himself—the will is the faculty of diligent seeking—and this testifies that he is immobile in his search for God.

Together with this absolutely prime moment, for which obedience is above all a binding and undeviating adherence of the entire spirit, there is doubtlessly a second, which is not of primary importance but which cannot be eliminated. Obedience is a non-willing in the sense that we renounce that which we would will, and therefore it means not willing anything as our own will. In obedience there is an indifference and a certain dismissal, a calm and a *disqualification*

of the will. Usually these elements which disarm the defiant will, and which are translated into a denial of self and a paralysis of will, especially strike us for their strangeness and their cruelty. It is just these elements which constitute the breviary of the novice. Perhaps because of this, "realist" literature, peering in from the outside, was dazzled by this obedience as non-willing or as the disqualification of the will, and poured upon it the lamentation and the scorn of the humanistic world, which, since the sixteenth century, considered these elements of Christianity an affront to liberty and as unjustifiable if not incomprehensible. Whoever remembers the pages which Victor Hugo dedicates in *Les Misérables* to the convent in which Jean Valjean takes refuge, in which prayer is ordered as penance and as Swedish massage for an atrophied will, whoever can call to mind certain pages of Verga's *Storia di una capinera* or Piovene's *Lettere d'una novizia*, is familiar with that humanism which, moving from its cult of liberty and creation and its accentuated *horror vacui*, could no longer divine the possible sense of this other world of Abbey and Cloister. When Carducci wrote the *Hymn to Satan* and summed up in the *Rosso Galileo* the image of a school of weakness and of depersonalization, he was caught in the common ambiguity in which *noluntas* as indifferenciation and neutral peace—(and for Carducci that neutral peace was death spreading its wings over human works and ideas)—was deemed to be the essence of the whole human reality of obedience. It is saddening to think that facile Christian pietistic literature has sometimes made of this moment of *noluntas*—a compound of indifferenciation and contradiction, of snuffing out of self, which is the effort of preparations for the ascetic exercise of obedience—the profound nature and the

entire substance of that same obedience. Praises of the peace to be found in obeying, the serenity of serving, which on the lips of an Anselm, a Bonaventure or an Ignatius are lofty mystic allusions to the repose of the will in God and the union with the living Word, have become quite commonly, with mediocre administrators not of souls but of practical situations, the panegyric of the quiet life and the avoidance of risks. The exaltation of the light which joins the creature in the harmony of his faculties when he centers his life in God alone and destroys sin, has often become, in a literature as glittering as it is substantially apathetic, the advocacy of a gray or neutral tone. This confusion of the quiet life with peace, and lack of resources with docility and readiness of will, accounts for the absolute break between obedience, to which the convent gives so much meaning, and initiative, which is of such decisive importance in life. This disfigured concept of obedience is of no value to the Christian who does not live in the cloister and who is not by nature disposed to join a club for the preventive sterility of the spirit, but rather believes that Christianity can and must be a humanism.

The truth is that obedience—if not a precious and indispensable ascetic exercise—cannot, even in the cloister, persist as *noluntas*. It is, above all, *noluntas* insofar as it is *firmness*; but this still does not at all suffice to define obedience, which is more than firmness: it is docility, and more than docility, a readiness and a fervor. Obedience is not easy. Monastic experience over the centuries has repeated an age-old observation with ever renewed conviction: one dies obedient, but is not born that way. But if this religious attitude seems difficult and complex and is the fruit of maturity, that is not due to the fact that it is a non-willing. Our will never comes in-

to play when we have one desire only, but rather when we have many diverse desires; and on the other hand, the most direct, impelling and obstinate realization is for man a hecatomb of possibility, tension, and unfulfilled volitions. The idea of a will, consequently, which no longer tortures us renders this non-willing practicable, even if only as assuefaction and habit. This is not to grant too much. There is in man a need to conform as well as to act, as the paradoxical polemic of Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor palpably shows: men want to be ruled; liberty, which Christ brings as a gift, is a heavy cross for the fragile shoulders of the everyday man. In this perspective, obedience as *relinquishment* of the will can be cruel but also sweet. But this is the delicate point involved: considered exclusively as a release from the will, obedience is not at all a deep religious commitment. It can only be an ascetic exercise.

The difficulty of obedience lies in its totality: and therefore, that obedience which passes through the abdication of the self-will later presents itself in the form of a *will free and liberated*. It is because of this that obedience is above all firmness of the will with intentionality: that sacred immobility which pagan poets and people in pre-Christian terms have gropingly sensed is a direct and constant fixedness of spiritual purpose on one point only: God. This intentionality, which remains unflinchingly fixed, sweetly reposing in or violently adhering to its point of concentration, in spite of the drama of multiple daily cares which would like to absorb the intentionality of the will, leaving no place for God, is the first sign of the religious soul. But this firmness of purpose is not all: it passes through a docility of the will, the power to follow and to will, which can be cultivated and prepared only by the exercise of non-

willing, by the continued crucifixion of that which is immediate, that which is close, that which is one's own. To be able to not will, immobilize the will, deviate the will, is to prepare oneself to be able to will anew. This is precisely the significance of that *docility* which has too often become an abstract myth: it is a negative ability of detachment, which is thought of as a positive ability.

Obedience does not simply consist in an adherence to the law or, more Christianly, to God, but rather in placing oneself at God's disposition, in the service and within the orbit of God's will. Only a personalistic vision of the world and of the absolute can truly reveal the whole concept of obedience, because only such a vision renders this possible as a spiritual position. For man, who is person, adherence is but an abstraction if it is not a consonance; and consonance has no meaning except as the finding of a motive for willing in that which is supremely willed, a willing something anew for love, in relation to a personal will which can be loved. This could, perhaps, be better phrased like this: obedience can only be life, and as life it is not a remaining without anything to will, but a free and sovereign, intense willing which follows another will in its programs and choices, harmonizing with that will. The surprise of the gradual revelation of new demands, presenting ever-changing invitations to action which are received with trepidation as the voice and presence of God: this is the nerve-center of obedience as a life of harmony. Through this, monasticism became aware that precisely for a supreme simplification and for supreme liberty of the spirit, the vow of obedience must become *rule*, that is, a continued proposal of actions and of states; and moreover, the will of men who rule must be authority, since only another living will can trans-

late into harmony with God the direct historical human renewal of the solicitations which come down from Him. The surprise of a new command presented by the rule or by the man who incarnates authority is essential in order to live obedience, by reason of one simple and grandiose fact: that in this conformance with the historically expressed will of other finite, historical beings, obedience reveals itself as energy of will, as readiness to follow, as fervor in movement with intensity. The question of obedience as historical subjection to a rule and an authority has philosophical roots, which St. Thomas knew well: the will never wills in the abstract, but always in the concrete; it is not intentionality towards the good, but volition of the good. To obey is to be able to will with ready, ever-renewed initiative all that which presents itself as a concrete means of expressing the direction of the will towards the Good; not to will several goods but only and always the supreme Good, giving Him that which He requires of us. The mark of saints is the sovereign readiness of spirit with which they remain always young, becoming enamored ever anew and throwing themselves completely into the act which God asks of them through the agency of things and men. It is on this level that obedience dwells: but at this level it is something exalted and delicately complex; it is a testimony of adoration within the newness of each act. All details become important as a means of testifying adherence to God, because in the concrete form of the command of God's agent He is once more adored and willed. For this reason it is not the faded eyes which nourish sanctity in the convent but the strong and vivid eyes which know how to become freshly enthusiastic: it is this fervor and this readiness to will which will make life flower in the cloister.

If that which we hold is true, it is

necessary to add that geniality is a very important aspect of obedience. It is easy enough to convince others, by the outward appearances of our obedience, of the goodness it reflects. But it is very difficult to perform an action seriously—to will authentically, that is, to seal the action with the chrism of personal participation—when it is requested, in some way demanded. Let us not delude ourselves on this point, since illusions would create a subtle and fatal confusion. The idea of Christian monasticism is not depersonalization but the rebirth of the personality on a higher level, in Christ; that is, the rebirth of a personality in love. When Simone Weil writes that the hallmark of her sin is ego, she voices one of the highest and most intimate affirmations of that Christianity towards which she was reaching out, if she alludes to the "*proprium*," the empirical ego which evokes Pascal's "*moi haïssable*." And to crucify pitilessly the "I" of instinct and habit or the "I" of his social station is the monk's first obligation; but all the universality of love to which the monk vows himself, the objectivity of the law in which he imprisons himself, the impersonality of the rule in which he is consumed, have meaning not as things of which his life is made, but as things which *he lives*; and therefore all these required forms are moments which the chrism of a voluntary personal participation records indelibly on the robe of personality. If the interminable sequence of like actions from dawn to sunset in a convent were not a chorale of incommunicable and individual acts of love, in which diverse lives are concentrated at all times, having those acts in common like a language (just as men and women who speak to each other of love have in a language (just as men and women who speak to each other of love have

ing.

This harmony of many offerings, each personal, accounts for the potency of prayer in the cloister, and to it is linked all that which the Christian world awaits from the rhythm of the psalms repeated in secluded choir stalls. When white or black shadows pass in the night, heads bent in the unique gesture of obedience, hands crossed on the breast, in that monotony which ceaselessly repeats itself is suspended the newness of each one who has found that night a fresh breath with which to sustain himself: and it is owing to that sweet and all-encompassing tension of a whole living being within a symbol, within a language, that the language can become a new symbol, even something completely new: the symbol of that infinite force to be found in the first genuflection of the fiery-eyed Ignatius of Loyola, or in the first silence of Augustine, the master of the irresistible rhetoric of Carthage and Milan. And in effect the Christian who lives in the world only succeeds in understanding obedience incarnate—and perhaps he is not to be blamed, but he then sees obedience confusedly as a triumph of personality. This, for him, can be the repetitious life behind the cloister walls: to suffer as did John of the Cross, to adore as Theresa knew how to adore, to build in peace like Benedict, to divest oneself of all, as did Clare. And it is not by chance that none of these who set themselves to bend the will in obedience had before him at the time of his confession the ideal of a manual, but rather an image and an act: to pray as the Son of Man had prayed. What is obedience in the anguished delirium of Bernard or Francis? In effect, to be obedient as was One only, *obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis*; which does not signify for these giants of the spirit to standardize oneself but rather to become intimate with an ideal, to reach out, to dedicate one-

self totally. To consummate a life of obedience is for these integral souls simply a question of divine friendship; it is to relive the infinite willingness with which Christ accepted every torturous human path in order to adhere to obedience; it is to relive the total and tireless passion with which He traveled from village to village, from one discourse to another, from one suffering to the next, to express in ever-youthful form His love for man.

He who reflects on obedience upon this integral level apprehends that to fulfill the daily tasks is not to bear them, it is to will them, to fashion them, to express them as *our* action: this personal participation becomes the nerve center of obedience. Thus, to obey is, in its complete cycle, to appropriate as one's own the signs and the commands, to live and act precisely for and in this. Nothing requires such resources of courage and of life, nothing demands so much from the wholeness of us, as making over the most ordinary and indifferent act of obedience. Love has an inventive faculty: and it is properly this inventive faculty alone which commands and which can sustain true obedience as readiness and fervor. And this sharpness of love can make of the monotonous and indifferent, which is the orbit in which obedience is circumscribed, that universal which is even quite unique, the true value. The Gospels realize the profound significance of this triumph: it is the small coin of the widow, the return of the adolescent Jesus with the parents who had lost Him. To follow behind another will as it moves, not being towed but following ever vigilant and ready: this is the essence of obedience, which is really an offering of oneself as a free man, a man who without preconceptions can as he goes along love the blade of grass or the clod of earth or the pulpit or the lectern. Because of this the saints are perhaps among those rare men who

never lose their way: in a place where there is nothing left to do, where the hope of human labor which triumphs and creates is weakening, before their eyes instead opens a sea of live possibilities, a youth of action and an accumulation of beckoning opportunities. It would seem that at the mere touch of these blind men who have placed themselves in others' hands, the world and history are able to reveal untold possibilities. There where initiative crumbles for the ordinary man, who draws his capacity to enjoy things from their own attraction and seduction, saintly initiative germinates, like an incandescent surprise. Initiative belongs to those for whom to command becomes the fount of love and of an awareness of love. The profound significance of this paradox lies in the fact that the very circumstance which immobilizes, leaden and hopeless, the man who is moved by sensible attraction, becomes a generator of energy and fertile vision for those men who, in obedience, know not the vocation of caprice but the call of life.

THE HUMANISTIC WORLD, which examines the monastic world from the outside, lost the concept of obedience, which has become instead the *caput* of a barrier of incomprehension between two spheres. But the confusion of terms has been founded on the failure to distinguish obedience as mobility and *no-luntas* from the degeneration of obedience as stability and as peace. Today however, more forcefully than ever before, history has brought us to a renewed discovery of obedience as readiness and fervor. In effect, there is an equivalent of monastic obedience for the Christian in the world. It is *ductility*. If we were forced to describe it, we could say that ductility is something as distant from compromise as monastic obedience is dis-

tant from passive sufferance. And the distance is measured by that *initial fixedness* of intention—the intention constantly directed toward God—which is the root from which spring alike both attitudes of the spirit, monastic obedience and ductility.

It is difficult enough in a world where life develops within institutional structures and where the horizons of existence coincide with the train tracks of a monotonous everydayness, to live the virtues necessary to the Christian. But in a world where all spins and multiplies itself in form and substance, in a world which is vigorous to the point of plethora, mobile to the point of rapidity, there are no train tracks to follow, only ruling principles. He who would like to reduce his Christianity to a minimum may schematize it in a number of things—many or few—which he will and will not do; he who would be simply Christian has but one law: to multiply his Christianity with the multiplication of the circumstances of life, of forms, of modes. For a profound, not a fashionable contemporary "practical" Christianity, there is but one valid formula: to respond Christianly, that is, to be everywhere Christian, to know how to look at everything with Christian eyes. On the other hand, the opulence of world and life which touches modern man does not present itself before him as an attraction, like a mirage, like something outside of himself; it besieges him rather as "situation" in which he himself is immersed, it visits him as "circumstance" which fixes him securely, as "moment" which presses him forward, as "condition" from which one cannot escape. Wealth is a gift of God, but even in the field of that richness of the spirit which creates history, it is a harsh gift: the wealthy man of today is still the captive of situation. We do not carry on a dialogue today with that which we

would like, but with that which is possible; from dawn to sunset modern life is prodded, by tomorrow even more than yesterday, by the here, the when, the how. We must give an account of ourselves for a thousand things and a thousand obligations which we never assumed: not family, country, work, but the union, fashion, democracy, the census, the club. Bureaucracy has replaced Christian spontaneity. If a man wished to adore God on a sunny day, he once could raise his voice and sing out his hymn under a free sky: today to adore may involve a commitment not to ever mention God in an environment where He is usually blasphemed; the song of the heart which might offend a passer-by is stifled.

Situation shapes modern life and is reflected on man as a web of incessant disciplines besieging man and bearing down upon him from all sides in the form of requests and commands. When history grows disproportionately in this form, it can offer two solutions, both bitter and children of misery: either *apathy* (for the Christian, "practical" reduction of Christianity), or *despair* (for the Christian soul aseptic perfectionism and the denial of responsibility). There is a third way: it is precisely *ductility*, which, let us make clear, has nothing to do with the common solution of compromise, which consists in reconciling a bit of everything, joining together the less rough edges of diverse things, but rather is revealed as acceptance of everything, offering oneself always with freshness and adult virginity. For the Christian this means to build on the fixedness of a constant intention which chooses God and adheres to that end.

For one who looks at things in this light, history, the old *magistra vitae*, with its harsh pressures, has turned up a precious concept. Even the world—es-

pecially the modern world where a thousand ever-changing circumstances weigh upon man, is a cloister. Within the walls of the Abbey, God calls with the voice of the Rule and the Abbot; without, He calls with the voice of situation and events. The rhythm demanded of the soul is the same: an extreme mobility of the will, which moves and renews itself, ever following the call in committed participation. Certainly this ductility can be a supreme religious moment only for one who knows how to live a supreme detachment; and it implies the whole spiritual preparation of the *contradiction* and *nullification* of the will, from which alone can spring *availability* of will. The sadness of the man of today is that of wandering about seeking the place and the hour in which he might be good; this sadness is often a drama, the drama of a search, as anguished as it is unacknowledged, for men to whom we would be able to be loyal; for the *securitas vitae* in which we would know generosity; for the silence in which we would really be able to pray; for the perfumed extension of dawns and sunsets in which we would become aware of the unseen tear; to be constantly surprised and moved by that which we love and are losing; for the hour of recollection in which we will be able to apprehend the smile of one who seeks from us more than bread; for flowers and birds and many other things yet, but one above all: the hope of our hearts in the Infinite.

All the men whom I have known today busy themselves about many things, but close within their tired souls the expectation of the hour in which all their goodness might run free. Most of us wait until death for that hour; many have never enjoyed even a fragment of this being free of the tempest of "pressure," of events, of situation. The situation may be the fear of a religious per-

secution or simply the enormous chronic tiredness of a psychic organism which is the target of distractions; but it is always the menace which makes us push towards tomorrow, postpone until a vague "other time" being able to live from within. Indeed this sadness involves our acts in a state of contradiction: drinking life daily in great gulps, but refusing to be convinced that in it one can live seriously; being aware that everyday life deprives us of another life, more intense and more intimate, which vanishes without having been grasped. One could be good, but there is neither the proper time nor the proper means; and one could even find God, but there are always so many things which press upon us: this is the modern tragedy.

This sadness is born, actually, of a total adjustment to modern "conditioning." This is not truly and properly acceptance, but rather an absorption in situation in order to reject it as a circumstance of life, to refuse to appropriate it as our own, to endure it without willing it. The true mode of action in a coactive existence is not to allow oneself to be pulled along, but to will obedience to life. To be obedient to facts is to subdue them in order not to succumb to them, that they may become then elements of a vocation, terms of a creativeness. It may seem strange, but the evangelic image of the yoke of Christ—proposed in the Gospel precisely to those who are tired and exhausted, as if by paradox—strikes the sensitivity of modern man. The yoke of life is made of nothing and of everything, of situation. It appears as unnerving discipline when it becomes rapidity, mobility, innovation, perpetual contradiction and cancellation, as in the life of today. And yet it is here that life begins, and it only begins by acceptance. The obstinate search for the ideal place and time is the rejection of the passing hour, a rejection

for which man could be judged and be lost. To seek another time and another place to breathe God is to reject the yoke of life. To reject the hour because it is difficult, because it has come without being invited, is to shake off the yoke of life, to postpone indefinitely the commitment to live. The yoke spoken of in the Gospels, the yoke of Christ, becomes a harsh thing if it must be conceived as the yoke of a useless law of perfection for men immersed in postponement and in the pressure of circumstances which man cannot eliminate and which can only render him more and more of a stranger to Christ and to himself. Rejection shatters the intimacy of man with the situation, attaches to the situation the curse of being denied as our own, yet does not free us from the chains of fact: the discipline of circumstance which hides the Christian call to life becomes the weight of existence, because it crushes the vocation to live. Still another time in this subtle form we find renewed for the history of each of us in his essence that "fatal point" which preceded history in the Garden of Eden and yielded grief: rejection. Not to accept is, in effect, the essence of man's damnation.

When Christ called his law sweet and his yoke light, perhaps he meant that it rested on the very call of life, and that He was calling us not in exotic and absurd forms but step by step along the paths and crags of life itself, reappearing at each crossing of a threshold, from one need to another, one problem to the next, as He Who wants to be discovered anew, asking of us only a readiness to move onward towards the light. The worldly equivalent of monastic obedience, then, is that ductility which scales one mountain after the other to follow the Christian ideal and the evangelical measure of life, and bears its standard

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THE CINEMA AS A MEANS OF EVANGELIZATION

RENÉ LUDMANN

Father René Ludman, C.S.S.R. is associated with the *Equipe d'information du Centre Pastorale des Missions à l'intérieur*. The article printed here is taken from his book, *CINÉMA, FOI ET MORALE* (Editions du Cerf, 1956). Despite the inevitable difficulties of detaching a section from a larger work, it is hoped that this selection will send many readers to the book as a whole, and to the excellent series of books on the cinema, *LE SEPTIÈME ART*, presented by the same distinguished Dominican publishing house. Although there are differences of emphasis, and sometimes extremely provocative differences when it comes to making concrete judgments, we believe it is fair to say that these studies, along with Henri Agel's *LA CINÉMA* (Casterman), and Amedée Ayffrè's *DIEU AU CINÉMA* (Presses Universitaires) represent an intelligent and positive approach to the movies, reflecting the same evolution of Catholic concern which has seen papal statements proceed from *VIGILANTI CURA* to more recent discussion of "The ideal film" (cf. the dossier "L'église et le cinéma," *INFORMATIONS CATHOLIQUES INTERNATIONALES*, Feb. 1956).

Although Fr. Ludmann does not take up esthetic problems as such in his brief work, a reading of his whole book, especially in conjunction with the other material cited, will make it clear that he has nothing pietistic or second-rate in mind. Admirers of *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS*, *THE BELLS OF ST. MARY'S*, and *THE SONG OF BERNADETTE* will receive no more comfort from these studies than those enterprising promo-

ters who defend as honest realism what Fr. Ludmann dismisses as "erotism épidermique."

Fr. Ludmann's book begins with a few bits of movie history. He then specifies some of the unfortunate influences of movies on moral conduct. The uncritical adulation of the stars, commercialized sex, sado-masochism and the cult of the gangster, the avoidance of genuine social and human problems through an unhealthy escapism, superficial and standardized behavior-patterns, the violation of private life under the banner of a shameless "sincerity," self-indulgence, the acceptance of an every-day, conventional morality. He then briefly discusses the question of a remedy, and some of his points here are found in an Appendix; he recognizes he cannot do justice to the special problems of movies for children and adolescents.

In Part II Fr. Ludmann ultimately situates his problem as one of faith rather than of morality. He then lists predominant elements in movies which are unfavorable to faith: superficiality, psychological alienation, the opaqueness of the image, rootlessness and sentimentality, the absence of God. Nevertheless, the cinema may be used as a genuine instrument of research; we can already perceive its positive value in throwing new light on the real which we had already seen, exploring our subconscious, opening our primitive egos to the possibilities of the marvelous and the demonic, creating a world where the dominant forces are no longer the solid, the constant, and the stable, but the fluid and changing.

Perspectives for Christian Thought

AT FIRST a scientific toy and a laboratory gadget, later an amusement-park diversion or a magic lantern with a bad reputation, the cinema is only 50 years old, and still wastes itself either in light amusement, or in copying the work of the novel or the theater.

We can only guess at the depths of this virgin forest in which a few paths have been traced. We might reflect on the remarks of Epstein to a Catholic film conference: "This gilded make-believe, this moving eloquence of the 7th art has not entirely succeeded in hiding from us a few signs which warn us that the phantoms of the screen have something to say besides their tales of laughter and tears: they speak of a new conception of the universe and of new mysteries of the soul. The disapproval of the professionally virtuous, who are somewhat scandalized, merely translates, in terms of current morality, a tremendous anxiety of long standing, but which no longer knows how to express all its meaning. A few of those who represent the present order are nevertheless aware that their instinctive fear and indignation is not simply over a richly sensual image. Their fears spring from something deeper and encompass a great deal more: they see the monster of novelty and creation, carrying with it the whole transformist heresy of continual becoming."¹

Only those are on trial who refuse to see. To them the cinema seems like a seductive monster, with little sense of balance. A poor relation of healthy reason, fancifully emotive, it seems to challenge eternal values. We, on the other hand, agree with Epstein—but from a different vantage-point—that the cinema may become a *creative* instrument, and even be favorable for theological development.

It is indisputable that movies can support and popularize theological thought. This has been accomplished by other, less powerful art forms; we might recall the influence of Byzantine mosaics which "fixed" the theology of Christ as Pantocrator, or the gothic statues which "incarnated" the more human theology of the middle ages, or even the painting of the Counter-Reformation which popularized, through images of monks contemplating skulls, the individualistic spirituality and asceticism of later centuries.

Art, as mirror of a civilization, sends back its light in an amplified measure. The least that we can say is that this art repeats the idea that it reflects; it deepens it by presenting it under a complementary aspect, which the purely rational concept cannot express. In this sense we might say that it makes this idea grow, since it proceeds to new explanations and to ideas which had previously been unperceived. Theology has always known of this complementary resonance to intellectual research, but the 7th art enlarges the horizon in a striking way because it is more of a total art than music, sculpture or painting. It enjoys an increased emotional power, and through dialogue adds to this the precision of rational development.

We should also say that *indirectly* the cinema can contribute to the enrichment of theology by provoking, through the problems that it presents, a new effort to think them through. It shares, with certain elements of our civilization, a polarizing role; in a similar way, the technical-industrial civilization and the birth of the mass, both of which are partial causes of de-Christianization, have contributed, for their part, to works on the mystical body, the meaning of unity, and missionary theology... On the pastoral level, by shak-

ing up certain institutions, they have brought about the creation of specialized Catholic Action. It is still too soon to decipher the role of contemporary mass media of communication. Surely the respect for conscience and private life, faced with the massive dosage of brutalizing propaganda techniques, and the role of the Church as educator of adults in an audio-visual civilization—these will be among the themes proposed to the reflection of the theologian and the pastor.

In addition, perhaps movies can help the theologian re-evaluate certain categories—essential to theology—but which have been neglected for a long time. A type of theology has been widespread which was too exclusively pre-occupied with constructing proofs and arguments, and slighting the notions of history, the event, affectivity, and the image-sign. Today's theology, strongly nourished by the bible and the liturgy, is rediscovering them. The cinema can help the theologian re-evaluate these more concrete data. The film, by its movement and its images, proceeds through intuition and sympathy more than by deduction and analytic proof; in this way it rejoins the progress of the faith of Saint Paul, which is an experience, and the Johannine "knowledge," which is a loving recognition. The cinematographic process by way of image-sign, is related to liturgical teaching; the liturgy gives us a foretaste, and helps us understand certain inexpressible realities through its use of water, oil, bread, the procession, the attitudes of prayer... "*ut dum visibiliter Deum cognoscimus, per hunc in invisibilium amorem rapiamur*" (Preface of the Nativity).

Thus the cinema can enliven, make explicit, and complete current theological research. We think of things explicitly only when we have discovered

the corresponding means of expression. As a recording-machine of emotion, the cinema can express, with more fidelity than writing, certain values of concrete life, which the academic theological system cannot capture. The revealed deposit of truths which are to be believed, the code of commandments, this whole structure which in itself is somewhat dry and abstract, can now be studied from life. Instead of dissection into categories, which is indispensable for conceptual precision, we can emphasize the living faith, the subjective experience: is not our faith a life with a Person? The probing of the subconscious, of the primitive ego, will surely allow us more properly to situate the human animal (in Mouroux's sense, as discussed in *The Meaning of Man*); in a similar way, the Christian thinker, more accustomed because of the cinema to the categories of evolution and becoming, will be brought to study dogma more from the viewpoint of history, as the *Credo* does. (Indeed, the latter deals with events, and looks forward towards the coming of the Lord of History.)

It is still too soon to give more details. Besides, we should not deceive ourselves with chimera: reality will always be invisible, the Person of Christ will not be encompassed by a screen, and faith can realize itself only in faith: the image gives a fragmentary and therefore incomplete view of the world.

But, far from becoming disturbed by Epstein's predictions, the Christian should rejoice, like a child who discovers new horizons in his Father's creation. He divines the new and rich possibilities of this tool of research, this exploring machine. The cinema will serve not simply to translate "the idea" that Michelangelo had of the power of the Lord, or in expressing the mysti-

cal state of Fra Angelico, or even in showing the work of grace on Bernanos' country priest—but new ideas and new states, which up to now have been confused or unsuspected, will be able to be drawn from the eternal and immutable deposit of revelation. (It is a little like, on another level, the rich theological contributions of the civilizations of the Far East, when they shall have meditated on the Mystery of the Savior by themselves, which up till now has been almost exclusively considered in western categories.)

The Cinema is a Tribune

IF WE CONSIDER the movies primarily as a distraction, the pastoral efforts will be principally brought to bear in terms of censures, moral ratings, the pointing out of dangers, and the creation of theaters which will guarantee "safe" entertainment for the entire family.² But if the cinema is a means of culture, this pastoral effort ought to be considerably augmented.

In the actual state of production, the cinema seems above all a spectacle; a distraction; people go to the movies to relax, and the majority of pictures have no cultural pretensions; the newsreels ordinarily show us only the most superficial aspects of the news: fashion, catastrophes, sports, officials. Nevertheless, the man in the street is instructed by the cinema without noticing it. Through foreign films, travelogues, etc., he enters into contact with other civilizations; the great historical frescoes build up past ages for him again; documentaries introduce him into new landscapes, little-known occupations, under-water life, etc. In short, a spectator can assimilate unconsciously a large amount of information which previously was reserved to English travelers of the 19th century or their avid read-

ers. An Italian sociologist claims that 9/10ths of what a worker or a peasant knows, comes from the movies.

When we say that the cinema is an instrument of culture, we are not thinking simply of films which reward the spectator with human knowledge, like picture stories on the life of beavers, or the difficulties of sponge-fishing, or of a merely popular culture, a humanism pure and simple, but of scenarios which constitute a true philosophy of life. We see such a preoccupation from Griffith's *Intolerance* to Chaplin's *Limelight*, as well as in *Orpheus*, *Dirty Hands*, *Silence is Golden*, *Daybreak*, etc.

It is not a matter of cornering the market, of clericalizing the movies and converting them into church halls. But since the screen has become one of those places where nourishment is distributed to the people, it is indispensable that they be able to find real sustenance in it. The cinema is called to become a means of evangelization—with all the nuances and qualifications understood that are necessary for such a claim; if we do not use it, it will become a factor in, de-Christianization.

In this, the cinema participates in today's atmosphere, and echoes those pastoral pre-occupations with regard to problems of environment, influences of society and particularly of the school. The Church has always watched over her rights in education as the apple of her eye. For several decades we have seen that the child, after getting his diploma, enters a new school, that of adulthood, whose professors are the newspaper, the radio, the movies, and television. The work of education must therefore be completed and adapted to the actual situation. "For if we remain insensible to the de-Christianization that has taken place over a long time through so many techniques, our neg-

ligence and sometimes our own hands will be demolishing that which we had painfully built up. Here is a new fact: the school has been displaced. It is not enough to set a magnificent pace for the first hundred yards, we have to win a relay race."³

The Potential for Evangelization in the Cinematographic Image

AT FIRST sight, the idea of using the movies to make God known will provoke indignation on the part of some and an indulgent smile in others. How can this indolent image, this sensual and violent screen, be of service both to the devil and our Lord?

These hesitations and reticences show a deep misunderstanding of the cinema, but we find them both among intellectuals whose mentality has been formed by a classical culture, and among ecclesiastics who tend to judge the cinema by its feverish advertising. An overly abstract western culture has atrophied certain capacities of our mind by allowing them to remain unused, and because of this we still find many cultivated men who are disconcerted by the rhythm and symbolism of movies, and hence cannot suspect the richness of the 7th art. An overly logical theology, too exclusively tied to reasoning and deduction, has persuaded many westerners that dogma can be incarnated only in a purely rational conception; the senses and the imagination, emotion and action inspire an instinctive fear in them. Finally, such hard and fast positions have seen in audio-visual culture only a menace to all rational method.

We are not faced with an alternative, but an enrichment; not a radical choice but an equilibrium: the geometric spirit of a deductive and logical culture, in which man exercises his conscious

psychic faculties almost exclusively, can be counterbalanced by the finesse of an intuitive culture.

Nevertheless, the image and the fact have an important place in Revelation and the teaching of the Church.

Our Lord spoke in parables and comparisons, and all the speculative ability of Saint Paul did not attain the sublimity of the image-packed language of Jesus. The prophets often joined symbolic actions to their words in order to transmit their message: think of the potter's vase of Jeremiah, the dried bones of Ezechiel. The sacraments employ "things" like bread, water, and oil; they are accomplished in action-signs and images of an invisible reality. The liturgy uses a whole pedagogy of symbolic signs, images, colors, and gestures. But the liturgy is one of the norms of faith, *lex credendi*, and a kind of active preaching; to be convinced of this, it is enough to re-read the sacramental catecheses of the Fathers. Revelation is not crystalized in abstract and disincarnate truths, but in divine interventions, in the great acts of the Lord who changes the course of history. The *Credo* sums them up in a faith in God who has made all things, in Jesus, who was born and died for us, and in the Holy Spirit, who works in the Church, while she awaits the return of the Lord. The faith of St. Paul is not simply an intellectual assent, but an adhesion of the whole being to God. Everyone knows these things, but they ought to make us more aware of the possibilities of cinematographic language for a kind of evangelization.

The word of God was for a long time transmitted orally from man to man, before being written down; nevertheless, we could not deny the new "possibilities" when it became Holy "Scripture." Immutable, the word of God

thus acquired a new power of diffusion and new forms of expression.

The photo, a new means of expression, can, in its way, translate God to men; it reproduces "objects," reflections of God; it shows the human drama in which grace inserts itself. The cinematographic image captures these objects and these dramas; it can open them to us and unfold their "meaning," their religious significance.

We will understand the evangelical possibilities of movies better by thinking of the 7th art from the point of view of the middle ages. The latter saw art as a praise of the Lord, but especially as a teaching. "The simple and the ignorant, all those whom one called the holy people of God, learned through their eyes almost all that they knew of their faith; thanks to art, the highest conceptions of theology and science dimly penetrated the minds of the humblest."⁴ The cinema can become the bible of the poor, just as were paintings in churches, the sculptures of the cathedrals, the great syntheses of the stained glass windows. Pope Pius XII is asking for this when he calls on it to incarnate the doctrine of truth in images which will not have the coldness of a theorem or the dryness of a law article.⁵

When shall a movie-maker take up again the song of the Psalmist

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters...

The voice of the Lord shatters cedars...

And in his temple all are saying, "Glory." (Psalm 28)

in order to translate "into our language" this praise of the Creator? The camera of a Flaherty might give us a presentiment of the joy of the children of God, if it knew how to look at our marvelous world with the eyes of faith, if it succeeded in giving it its real dimension.

The classics of French psychological cinema have no place for God on their screen, but what interior riches would a Vigo, a Renoir, or a Delluc have revealed to us if they had lit up their conflicts of passion, and the area within which the human drama is played out, in such a way that the real actors would appear—God and Satan, sin and grace!

The spiritual potential of the cinema appears to us to be very rich, but the requirements of our thesis should not make us overestimate them.

In addition to the fact that the spectator must bring a sufficient good will for the "meaning" of the work to be revealed to him, the world of signs will always remain ambiguous and limited; only faith can adequately grasp religious truth. The supernatural is difficult to translate to the screen; the appeal that God addresses to a soul is the most indescribable thing imaginable. All that the screen can show us occurs after the event; the event itself cannot be rendered.⁶

Finally, the language of the screen will always be only a subsidiary form of the evangelical proclamation, and if we use a word like evangelization, we should not give it its usual density. The proclamation of the Word, made by the herald of God, contains a quasi-sacramental function, since it is invested with a supernatural force as transmitted by a witness of God.

We cannot say the same thing about techniques, even when they are used by a saint, and *a fortiori* by an actor. The sermons of Vilbert in *Manon des sources* and of Fresnay in *God Needs Men* may well be less boring than many Sunday homilies, but it cannot be compared with the quasi-sacramental proclamation of the Word of God. The latter is situated on a completely dif-

ferent level. The Word is a "mystery," an irruption of God in history; it is a stranger to techniques, even if they are apostolic: God is not to be placed on the level of means. Techniques of communication are easily, too easily, vitiated by men; they include elements which are in opposition to the freedom of a personal choice: pressure of propaganda, superficiality, easy and deceitful emotion. A certain naive optimism will be able to make believe that what has succeeded for evil will succeed for good; these utopian dreams are based on a false understanding of the Christian civilizations of the world of Constantine or of the middle ages. They forget that the exterior success of the Church does not necessarily or always correspond to the real work of the Lord; the profound success of the apostolate is not visible in this world.⁷

Evangelization by modern means of expression is valuable only in submission to the primacy of supernatural means, as prolongation of or preparation for the preaching of the gospel, by illustrating it *a posteriori*, by furnishing it with human elements or by providing it with means of incarnation in the audio-visual civilization which is now being prepared.

It is in this sense that we can say that evangelization finds new possibilities in the cinema.

Means of Evangelization Adapted to our Time

THIS POTENTIAL for evangelization finds itself doubled by the fact that the screen is a means of expression which is especially well adapted for our times. Our generation is assisting at the birth of a new world; man, under the influence of techniques, is disappearing as an individual in order to be re-absorbed as a new entity: the

mass. Urbanization is a world-wide phenomenon, frontiers are vanishing and the human consciousness becomes planetary. This mass has a brain and a nervous system. The center of influence in the 17th century was Versailles, in the 18th it was the salon of the *philosophes*, in the 19th it was the pharmacist Homais, and later the school-teacher of the third Republic. Today such voices would be too small and delicate for the mass audiences of newspapers and radio, but the real language of the new world is that of the cinema. After the Greek of Mediterranean times, the Latin of the Middle Ages, diplomatic French and commercial English, and attempts at an artificial international language, finally the universal language is born: the image.

The Christian sees a precious means for universal evangelization in this new means of expression. The cinema is a loudspeaker of modern dimensions, and permits us to proclaim God's truth "from the housetops" (*Matthew 10, 27*). The Christian is concerned with bringing the Gospel to those who are not yet in the fold, and who will not be reached by the Sunday sermon, since the mass of men are unaware of the path of the Church: "Only, how are they to call upon him until they have learned to believe in him? And how are they to believe in him, until they listen to him? And how can they listen, without a preacher to listen to?" (*Rom., 10, 14*). He is concerned to bring a response to men's questions, at the spot where they naturally come up, and not simply in a closed, esoteric circle. The means of salvation must be made available in a permanent way for every man of good will. This is the vocation of God's church. It has the task of orienting not only the individual toward God but also the collective thought of today. It desires that this

universal brain, whose reflexes touch and command each individual, be at the service of men for their salvation. Conversion and salvation are the affair of persons, but God does not address himself only to individual souls, but to men in the very environment in which they are rooted.

The cinema is a mass language, not only because it is a universal language, but because it expresses itself in terms of mob psychology, and not in terms of individual reason. It speaks to the eyes of the heart, it is intuitive, it follows the laws of feeling. Like the crowd, it does not pursue a line of argument, but moves us and impels us to action. It proves by evidence, it convinces by love and hate, and in this way is in remarkable agreement with the psychic movement of the crowd. The almost instantaneous sympathy of the cinema and the crowd is the indication of a profound appetite in the new human animal. It is curious to note the development of the movies in countries where there is a rapid ascent of the masses: India, Russia, etc.

Just as the Gospel was proclaimed to the Graeco-Roman civilization with its mentality, it should be incarnated in our time into the audio-visual psychological elements that are appropriate to making the Christian mystery more easily grasped by the mass mentality. To this mass, which is more emotional, and more oriented to the concrete, let us speak in its own language. (*Acts 6,7*).

Such an incarnation is a delicate undertaking, for it is necessary to adapt oneself to the psychology of the time, it cannot be a question of "using" the emotional shock of a film to bring about a return to God.⁸ The emotions aroused by movies tend to be transitory, and are enhanced by a temporary magic; they are rather a psychological alienation than a free response. It is a lan-

guage adapted to the mass and capable of influencing public opinion, but to influence public opinion is "to make it"—which is a process completely foreign to evangelization which "proposes" and addresses itself to a person. We may think of a universal evangelization, made to reach those whom we no longer meet in our churches, in order to respond to the questions at the spot where they are arise, but we must be aware of the risk of depreciating the message by presenting it to any passerby, or by making it serve economic interests.

It is hardly a question then of thinking of the movies as a panacea for the evangelization of the mass. The attentive Christian will nevertheless be able to see a marvelous correspondance, certainly willed by God, between the birth of a new world and the discovery of means of expression which would be able to help in evangelization.

Modes of Expression

This presence of the Christian message in the cinema is achieved in various degrees, in terms of a very variable intensity of expression. The cinema has already produced a good number of works where we can discover approaches *analogous* to habitual religious instruction. Although these modes of expression cannot be rigorously classified, we would suggest the following distinctions:

1. The Spiritual Film.

This species of film, without being Christian or even religious in any positive sense, implies a certain transcendence of the natural, an openness to the absolute, and thus locates the human drama within supernatural perspectives. The center of gravity is situated out-

side of man; in this category one cannot as yet speak of the presence of God, but this absence is not that of which we spoke earlier; it is not a mutilation. Here a certain hope is indicated, a certain sense of the supernatural, in the sense in which Saint Thomas asserted that man naturally desires the supernatural.

La Strada might be taken as one of these spiritual films. Fellini, when asked if his film were Christian, replied that it was Franciscan. It cannot be said that *La Strada* poses a directly Christian problem, and yet it does order human destiny in terms of a certain transcendence. To ignore this implication is to strip this work of its peculiar identity. *Rashomon*, to take another example, is not a spiritual film simply because of the Buddhist monk's reflections, but rather because the whole ambience of evil, of the satanic, the whole passionate drama, is situated on a plane on which man is no longer his own master. Again, *Our Daily Bread* is not a Christian film, despite the fact that its hero dies on Good Friday. Yet it is certainly a film with spiritual implications since the misfortune of this particular Italian family carries the quest for happiness beyond a comfortable stone house.

On the other hand, *Potemkin*, while implying a certain kind of transcendence, a sacrifice for a noble cause, does not locate this transcendence outside of man. In this case the supernatural is not to be inferred, for the simple reason that it is implicitly denied. *Papa, Mama, the Maid and I* and other works of this type are rather a breath of fresh air than anything else: sweet, proper, wholesome, they reveal a certain unpretentious natural honesty.

There are other works, which, because of their ambiguity, are more difficult to interpret. *Limelight*, for example, suggests a transcendence capable of being

understood in Christian terms, despite the fact that Chaplin's work, taken as a whole, would suggest otherwise. *The River*, with its warm sympathy for humanity, is without doubt the film of Renoir's which comes closest to the spiritual; and this documentary on Hindu life seems rather a vague, pantheistic statement in which the divine is reduced, in the final analysis, to a hymn to nature.

2. The Film Which Poses a Christian Problem

The spiritual film, whatever certain people might think of it, seems to us to represent but one of the possibilities for evangelization through the cinema. Greek tragedy too is spiritual, but it does not lend itself to evangelization, any more than do the initiation rites of a primitive African tribe: the transcendent can, after all, include the transendent, satanic or surrealist. A purely spiritual universe, in the sense of a natural religion, is for the Christian nothing more than an ante-chamber, and films such as those we have mentioned will represent for him nothing more than a sort of pre-evangelization. Saint Paul was never satisfied with simply the introductory sections of his discourse on the Agora; Christ crucified and risen was the ineluctable fact which stood at the center of his message.

Rouquier's *Lourdes* might serve as an example of the directly evangelistic film, since it forces the spectator to confront a problem of Christian actuality. We have here not so much an exposition of Christian religion as one of those initial shocks capable of disturbing an audience. For in this movie we have an irruption of the supernatural into the tranquil order of nature. *Ciel sur les marais*, the Italian film on Maria Goretti, is quite neutral, objective enough in fact to pass for a simple depiction of

human experience: a rape, a murder. Yet the alert spectator of good will can not fail to see the necessary relationship between the young girl's refusal and her sense of sin, between her life of prayer and the heroism of her death.

To us *Monsieur Vincent* seems weaker, since the hero's charity, his altruistic heroism do not differ greatly from that of a devoted humanitarian. The charity of "Saint" Vincent, stemming from a life lived in and with God, tends to be obscured by the sympathetic "Monsieur" Vincent of the film.

3. The Profoundly Christian Film

In this category of films faith is assumed; it would correspond to the post-baptismal catechism just as the preceding category might be said to correspond to the initial evangelization. Without being totally incomprehensible to the non-initiated, its content can be profitably assimilated only by the believer.

Nuit de Paques might well be placed in this category. The amazing reactions of some militant Catholic action groups toward this film are enough to demonstrate how this sort of film can be at once spiritually unwieldy and yet capable of deepening our understanding of certain aspects of the Christian mystery. The non-Christian will be interested in *The Diary of a Country Priest* to the same extent that he might be interested in the liturgy of the Mass; he will be aware of the esthetic or "folklorish" aspect, of the human drama of this man of the cloth. It is even possible that the strange life of this priest will lead him to reflection, but the mystery of grace struggling with the powers of darkness will escape him, in all probability. *The Diary of a Country Priest*, in short, probes the depths of faith.

Pre-evangelization by means of the spiritual film would appear to be preferable, quantitatively, to other types of

expression, and, psychologically, it has been the most accepted. At the same time we must be dissatisfied with any evangelization whose character is pre-rather than post-baptismal.

The cinema is, by its very nature, pre-occupied with concerns which are not formally religious. The primary function of the 7th art is the representation of the human drama. It will be admitted that this drama is open to its own spiritual implications, but to graft onto it in every case a kerygmatic dimension would be artificial. Saint Paul recommends preaching in season and out of season, but there is a time for everything, and one must seek out the most favorable conditions.

At the present time the anomalous nature of the movies does not seem to favor films of a distinctly religious texture. Some works—such as *Ciel sur les marais*, which modestly allow the viewer to draw his own conclusions, or Rouquier's *Lourdes*, which confronts us with a religious fact without any heavy-handed or wearisome moralizing—seem balanced enough to make them suitable for a very large public. It would be a risky business to force upon unbelievers themes which presuppose the faith, mysteries which the primitive Church disclosed only after the baptismal initiation. *Le défroqué* treats of the Communion of Saints, vocation, priesthood, and the efficacy of the sacraments, all before a public which understands nothing and which bursts into laughter at the most tragic of scenes. *Le pain vivant* shows to all comers the mystery par excellence of Christianity, the sacrifice of the Mass. One experiences here the same uneasiness that one does in a solemn Church procession in the midst of a hostile or indifferent population. Certain manifestations of Christian piety are exquisite and delicate, but they are not understood except by those who love

the Lord. When unveiled before an audience without the faith, they provoke the worst sort of laughter and have the same effect, says Newman, as love letters read aloud in a police station. (It is known that for these reasons, further accentuated by the presence of Protestants, German theologians have spoken out against televising the Mass.)

Those men who are as yet too far from God cannot stand "strong wine"; they must be given "spiritual milk," a type of fundamental education which will open them and prepare them for intimacy with Christ.

Requirements for Presence

WE HAVE SAID that Christ's message should be announced on the spot, that the Christian should bring the answer to the questions of today at the point where they have been raised, but this must be carefully understood. Psychological conditions, particularly respect for the freedom and the atmosphere of movie projection—and certain postulates relative to the film itself—are indispensable if we are looking for a genuine evangelization with the aid of the screen.

Freedom and Atmosphere

First of all, the spectator should not be the victim of a trap. He should know in advance what he is going to find. Direct preaching before a public that has not been prepared—for example, a documentary on Ordination or the story of Moses—will only encourage whistling from an audience that has come for light entertainment. A sermon is not something to be forced on someone who has just spent a dollar to pass a pleasant evening.

A minimally favorable atmosphere is required to facilitate the receptivity of the audience, the possibility of a spirit

of recollection, and the effort needed for the density of the image to be revealed to it. There is some incongruity in proclaiming the word of God as the other half of a double feature whose main attraction is a rock-and-roll film, and we recall the showing of *Procès au Vatican*, a biographical film on St. Thérèse of Lisieux, which was introduced by "coming attractions" which encouraged the audience to return the following week for the higher refinements of sexual titillation.

Before a prepared public, before Christians who recognize that they are only at the threshold of the discovery of their mysteries, who have come together to deepen their faith, more serious work can be done. In such a case the film can catalogue the most exquisite treasures in an ideal atmosphere; it can easily be framed by the commentary of a priest and a common prayer. A few rather timid experiments have been made with young groups in this direction, for example an Easter retreat, in which films introduced and discussed by a priest were shown. More precisely, it was a matter of developing meditations on thematic concerns raised by a movie—creation (*Voyage à travers l'espace*), the human family (*Farrebique*), the lie in the world (*Our Daily Bread*). These films, without themselves possessing a spiritual content, were able to provide the occasion of reflection, prayer, and a deepening of faith. Imagine the enrichment which the Christian community might gain by the projection, with commentary by the priest, of films like *Les Anges du Péché*, *Moses*, *The Passion of Joan of Arc*.

Authenticity and Efficacy

The first interior condition of a religious work is authenticity; it is irreplaceable. In order to be the translation of the gospel message, it must be faithful

to it. *Samson and Delilah*, *Fabiola*, and *Salome* have hardly contributed much to make the Bible, God's word, better understood. Ultimately it is the vices of the ancient peoples that these films have made us see. We cannot be initiated to the story of the people of God by reducing its content to that of a gossip column. Does *Don Camillo* help us understand the social doctrine of the Church? Does it not rather make us believe that, with a little fast talk, there will no longer be any problem? There are other films, like *The Miracle of Fatima*, *Jocelyn*, and *Procès au Vatican*, which are full of good intentions, but whose spiritual poverty betrays the heart of their message, cushioning it with sweetness and light; we are no longer in the presence of the Sacred or in the dark night of Thérèse.

Too often authenticity is compromised by an unfortunate concern for immediate effect. The poverty of spirit, which the Gospel calls for, would in this case call for a refusal to manipulate those very human elements in order to present a spiritual message. A few examples:

The "star" system. The made-in-Hollywood Ingrid Bergman (whose films should not be confused with those she made more recently with Rossellini) hid the message of Joan of Arc under skilful publicity and a performance which was psychologically successful but totally empty of the breath of the supernatural—exactly the inverse of the performance of Maria Falconetti in Carl Dreyer's masterpiece!

Cheap emotion. The rhetoric and exaggeration of *The Fugitive* (missing the meaning of the Graham Greene novel on which it was based, *The Power and the Glory*) or *Défroqué* places the electric shock and suspense thrill at the service of the faith.

The false sympathy employed in *The*

Song of Bernadette, which gave the saint a fiancé in order to make young girls cry and catch the boy's hearts; or the American make-up artistry which transforms the priest into a Bing Crosby, a "regular guy" who is discreetly in love with a nun (*The Bells of St. Mary's*). Sometimes we even meet the most vulgar eroticism, which mixes a confused religiosity with the skilful exploitation of sex appeal (*Samson and Delilah*, *Fabiola*).

The emphasis on décor drowns the supernatural, which is essentially hidden and interior, under an archeological junk-heap. (This is true of almost all the biblical "epics" of movie history).

The Western which awkwardly tries to hurry along the action of grace.

All these tricks betray the authentic message; it is the most dishonorable mental castration to secularize religious sentiment by emasculating it. Expression and exteriorization are confused, and instead of incarnating a spiritual value, it is made into a mere anecdote.

At the same time authenticity always implies efficacy, but since it is a supernatural efficacy, it is invisible and conditioned by the good will of the spectator. Evangelization essentially aims at *metanoia*, the orientation towards God.⁹ A religious film which would only be an exercise in style, even if austere and without concessions to vulgarity, would falsify authenticity by its very intention. Many so-called religious films compromise all pretension to transmit a message by their very conception. For a film to have an evangelical importance, there should be an act of faith which would involve a certain missionary intention.

The equilibrium between efficaciousness and authenticity will always be very unstable: to save the former at the expense of the latter leads to the aberrations we have just discussed, but the

inverse is pointless from the pastoral point of view: if someone wants to speak, it must surely be in order to be heard. The films of Dreyer and Bresson are of such a rigor that they tend to rebuff the average spectator. These masterpieces have their justification from the aesthetic point of view for a restricted audience, but we would like to see films which would sacrifice nothing to commercial facility and which would nevertheless be simple enough to be understood and attractive enough to please: *La Strada*, for example, *Our Daily Bread*, *Brief Encounter*, *Lourdes*, *Ciel sur les marais*. Otherwise we will be reduced to those films we discuss in order to point out their failings, and those works of quality which are inaccessible.

These reflections lead us to another on the freedom of the message *vis-à-vis* its artistic elaboration. We speak as a priest, not as an art critic (to which we have no claim):

Since the cinema is an art, every movie should, by its nature, submit to the aesthetic rules proper to the cinema. There is no special aesthetic for a religious film. In building a church, we prefer an artist who is not practicing his religion, but who has the sense of the sacred and knows his *métier*, to a jobber who has nothing to contribute to the building but his good will. An attitude of indulgence in regard to unsuccessful religious films is an indication of weakness, a drawing back from authenticity and spiritual intensity. It would be dangerous to accept *on principle* films that suggest Barclay street art¹⁰ simply because some people are moved by them. We should not forget that such films can well help to confirm the pious in their false spirituality, and to drive others still further away from God.

But sometimes God is glad to make fun of the canons of art—not that the

message of the Gospel goes against art, but because it is beyond it. The supernatural is neither for nor against strictly human values; it is situated on another level.

Certain works, although sculptured naively by awkward hands, have a religious expression far superior to Raphael's Virgins. They are exquisite fumbings, overwhelmingly powerful faults of style, in which the supernatural breathes easily, while the charming mistresses executed by Renaissance painters only "naturalize" the sacred. Malraux says that "A crucifix of Giotto is a testimony, Leonardo's *Last Supper* a sublime tale."¹¹ Refinement and eloquence are secondary for a work of faith; or rather, the supernatural has such a force and such a splendor that it ought normally to become visible, when it has not been betrayed; if films of pious sentimentality are bad, it is more because of their spiritual inadequacy than their artistic faults. The Gospel of Jesus and the sermons of the Curé d'Ars have no literary intention, but they have an emotional power which leaves the "sacred orators" far behind. St. John's poverty of vocabulary, the rough syntax of St. Mark even increase the expression of their message. "Art requires love; in order to paint Christ, one must live with Christ," said Fra Angelico. *La Strada* seems almost intentionally not to know how to succeed (in the American sense of the word), but Fellini had something beautiful to say, he said it as simply as possible, and it is a masterpiece.

The restraint of style, the small number of camera movements, the renunciation of elaborate sets, all contribute to giving expression to the interior souls studied by a director like Bresson. Nevertheless, such poverty of means can border on affectation, and his extreme restraint seems close to Jansenism; if he pursues his refinement of style to the

extreme, Bresson will spoil the message that he wants to transmit, or at least he will reserve its understanding to an esoteric and restricted group.

But if the cinema, in our view, is first of all a means of evangelization, this evangelization is expressed and becomes incarnate in a language which is *also* an art: the two poles ought to have enough tension to balance with each other, for if the Gospel is beyond art, if it can allow itself faults against art—then at least let it be a magnificent mistake!

APPENDIX

Remedies for the Morally Destructive Influence of Films

Production Codes

WE DO NOT THINK that a production code which limits the creator of the film even in matters of detail is an efficient remedy against the brutalizing aspects of commercial movies. Such a code involves as many dangers as benefits. Without taking up again the interminable discussions on the freedom of art for art's sake, independent of all morality, or on the necessity for all art to be moral, we can say that *in fact* a production code is a wager.

The best known case is that of the American production code. It restricts the movie-maker to certain conventions of worldly morality which more or less coincide with the norms of western good manners. The enumeration of restrictions is amusing in itself, and it has been the constant headache of the censors. (Imagine their embarrassment when they asked Howard Hughes for 136 cuts in his film, *The Outlaw*, and his lawyer came with 4,000 bits of film representing Hollywood actresses, in order to demonstrate, for example, that Rhonda Fleming showed 65% more of her charms than Jane Russell, and that the *décolleté*

of Marie Wilson was 3.40% lower than that of his star!)

The fundamental vice of this kind of code is that it is artificial. In legislating with a luxury of details, it is forgotten that if the great principles of morality are immutable and are valid for humanity as a whole, their incarnation varies with customs and periods: some details of our western morals are shocking to an Asian, and the same film may be listed as approved for the whole family by the American Legion of Decency, approved only for adults by its French equivalent, and only for adults, with reservations, by Belgian censors. This is perfectly legitimate, of course, since these listings are made in terms of the probable influence of the film on a given public.

These codes all disclose a certain simplistic automatism which demands that good should inevitably be rewarded and evil be infallibly punished; the segregation of decent people from the wicked is made in terms of an arbitrary line, whereas everyone is capable of both the best and the worst. As for the Hollywood happy-ending, it is a new *deus ex machina* which can convince only a cynical conformist.

The most serious difficulty is that these codes (just as state censorship) tend to inhibit any attempt to deal with the great problems of the day: poverty, unemployment, strikes, juvenile delinquency, racial injustice, colonialism, conscientious objection, the judicial system, etc., all tend to be automatically eliminated since a film ought to exhibit only "a correct norm of life."

Ultimately, this rose-colored code is filled with good intentions and wants to represent the human drama solely as it ought to be, instead of as it is. The only difficulty is that this is equivalent to representing a world that doesn't exist.

We are not only surrounded by sin, we ourselves are involved in sin, and it is useless to try to hide it from ourselves. Everything depends on the manner in which it is shown to us, on the vision of the world which explains it and gives it its meaning. There is certainly more moral health in a Rouault painting of a prostitute than in the angels portrayed by Boucher and Fragonard, and Sartre's film, *The Proud and the Damned*, with its portrayal of the corrupt atmosphere of decadence, has more concern for morality than the lavish Esther Williams musical, *On an Island with You*, which literally observed the production code but consistently exploited the most dubious kind of commercial eroticism.¹² Aren't the great symbols of Hollywood movies, the gangster and the pin-up girl, both in perfect conformity to the production code?

"The danger of this position is that it corresponds much too well to that social and worldly hypocrisy according to which it is good form to submit to injustice in silence, to hide evil and sin, and cultivate a tranquil conscience."¹³

In brief, an artist has the right to create the work he bears within him, and society cannot destroy it or mutilate it. Too many stupidities have already been committed in this area, too many cuts have destroyed the meaning and range of excellent films, for anyone to waste regrets over this dictatorship in the area of artistic *creation*. But when a film compromises the equilibrium necessary for social life, society does have the right to protect itself and to limit the *influence* of the work.

Official Censorship

We cannot allow the persuasive power of the 7th art to be monopolized by commercial exploiters. The cinema is a mass art, and has considerable influence on society. The latter's disinterest in

movies would therefore be an abdication of its responsibility; the concern for public health and tranquility requires that society should exercise some control over the cinema.

Everyone (except the skin merchants) is in agreement about wanting to protect our children against material that would overly excite them, or brutalize them; the manner of achieving this, however, (a sign saying, "Not for those under 16,") is extremely naive. Many adults should also be protected, because they are held spellbound by movie images, and remaining completely passive, have no critical defense. Movie houses are open to everyone, and there is no system of keeping out the feeble-minded and the psychopathic—and in our neurotic modern world, who knows how many these classifications include! Movie-making intellectuals manipulate ideas and images as if they were addressing an audience of critics or a *ciné-club*, and have no notion of the frightening reactions they may provoke among adolescents and overly passive adults. No one complains about a police report on a slum neighborhood, or a model posing for an art class. But a healthy society should nevertheless reflect a little on the consequences of the commercial distribution and indiscriminate showing of some of the films of Sternberg, Brunel or von Stroheim, even though their work has genuine value.

Most of the sarcasm that has been aroused by censorship has come from the awkward application of these principles. But despite the silliness that has often been shown, some kind of censorship is necessary for a healthy society; real liberty does not consist in being able to perpetrate stupidity or to do harm.

As soon as we try to work things out in practice, we run into a host of difficulties, and we are tempted to overcome

censorship itself. The latter will inevitably include an arbitrary element, since it tends to treat all spectators alike. The worst mistake would be to set down very fixed categories, since, if moral principles are unchanging, their application in detail does undergo change. We are dealing with *human* problems and it is a matter of foreseeing the influence of a given film on people today, in particular circumstances. An automatic measuring rod would be disastrous for such an assignment. Everything depends on the choice of censors; they should be sufficiently diverse for their viewpoints to be complementary and to avoid all prejudice; free enough and open-minded enough to censor without smothering creativity; and strong enough to be efficacious. They should prohibit some films for the general public and encourage their showing for restricted groups who are interested in getting to know them.¹⁴ This is a great deal to ask at once, and they are bound to appear too severe on one occasion, too lenient on another. In ethics the lesser evil is often the best action, and should accordingly be chosen.

Complementary Censorship and Moral Ratings

THE STATE HAS THE RIGHT to limit the influence of a film in order to protect the health of a nation. Most of the time official censorship is hopelessly inept. Hence, it is hardly surprising that the need of a supplementary and private censorship should make itself felt.

The Church, for her part, has a message to transmit to the world. She would be failing in her vocation if she did not do all in her power to raise the level of civilization. Her protest against harmful movies is not only her right, but her duty.

The moral rating of movies is nevertheless something quite different from extra censorship. Even if society fulfilled

its duty, the Christian would make higher demands on himself, since he should have a more delicate conscience and should want to live in terms of a greater ideal.

These ratings are valid only for a conscience. They lose their meaning for those who have no notion of sin; if they do not believe they are sick, they cannot believe in the doctor.

Many Christians themselves see in these lists only an extra barrier, whereas they ought to be a means of growth. These Christians should rediscover a sense of sin. In the atmosphere in which they bathe, Christians are no longer shocked by anything they see on the screen (or about them); the extreme prudery of our fathers has been replaced by the exaggerated indulgence of today. To accept the sinner (since, after all, we are sinners ourselves) does not mean indifference to evil. If a Christian no longer has any moral delicacy, if he can no longer blush or refuse himself any pleasure out of a spirit of sacrifice (even a pleasure which may in itself be permitted), what remains of his role in the world: "If the salt loses its savor, with what will it be salted?" The Christian, if he is *in* the world, is not *of* the world. Only a Christian who knows how to demand in his choice of magazines, TV programs and films, will escape the mentality of the day and have an influence on it.

Why cry "Index" or complain about the infantilism of Christians' letting themselves be muzzled by a super-paternalistic Church? A Christian cannot logically accept certain films and subsidize them with his money if they are the exact opposite of his convictions. A Christian conscience should reject certain amusements, because they tend to dull the delicacy of his moral demands (*personal conscience*) and because his admission ticket is a kind of vote: he would

be encouraging the production of similar films (*social conscience*). The atheist would agree with such an attitude. It is not a matter of coercive measures, and in general the decisions of the various national Catholic film review boards "give the faithful the opportunity to inform their conscience, but have not of themselves an obligatory force."¹⁵ If a Christian has *valid* reasons for seeing a film that has met with disapproval, let him act according to his conscience.

It is true that the same listing will be too strict for someone who is well-informed, and perhaps too lenient for someone who is unbalanced; we must always keep in mind the influence of the film on a particular person. If, on one hand, someone can ignore the warnings of the list because of a more phlegmatic temperament or for other special reasons, someone else should personally take the initiative of avoiding a film which the list had marked "Approved," because he has reason to believe it would do him harm.

This is quite different from simply ignoring the lists. If we refer any notion of a moral norm to ourselves, we make ourselves the center of the world. Every work is objectively moral or immoral, whatever its repercussions on individuals. Nothing can prevent an unhealthy film from being so, even if it does no harm to particular individuals—just as *The Rules of the Game* and *The Bicycle Thief* remain masterpieces, even if many of the spectators didn't understand them.¹⁶

Besides, the ratings attempt to adapt their judgments to various categories of individuals: approved for all, for adults, for adults with reservations. They are of value for the average spectator and are a probable indication; in this way they allow every one to form his own conscience. The Christian who would systematically ignore such help as is

provided can rightly be accused of carelessness, imprudence... and silly pride.

Finally, even for the non-Christian who has a serious concern for morality, the ratings, far from being a barrier, are a service. In the actual situation, the spectator can only with difficulty have much advance notion concerning the film that he is about to attend: the signs, the title, the publicity photos only inform him on details; the consumer has the right to know what he is going to receive, and the rating for him becomes an element of his *freedom*.

Even though we recognize the value of the efforts of Catholic movie ratings and appreciate the tremendous difficulties which the judgment of a film involve, we still wish that the listing was less incomplete.

It would be helped by being placed in the context of a more positive notion of morality. Negative censorship cannot be an instrument of progress and movie education. It can point out the dangers, but not the good roads. Films of high spiritual density cannot be detected by this means, and *The Diary of a Country Priest* finds itself in the same category with *Tarzan in New York*. Even the word moral lends itself to confusion; in fact, it implies philosophical theses.

We would like to see the rather blunt judgment (not recommended, for adults with reservations) amplified by the addition of an explanatory statement. It is not a matter of showing someone how far he can go without sin (the worst kind of casuistry), but in forming consciences by helping them choose the best films.

Finally, we believe the listing would be helped by extending its classification to artistic values. At the present time we find on the forbidden list both the most inept examples of erotica and some of the greatest classics of the screen. Of course, as an official religious organiza-

tion, the office that provides these lists is not competent to provide a definitive judgment on the artistic value of a movie. But this does not prevent Christians from having a cultural concern and pointing out, in an additional non-official note, movies that are especially deserving of support. The 1954 Congress of the International Catholic Cinema Office felt that the classification of films should contribute to the education of the public, and wished that "the classification should be accompanied by an appreciation of films"; it recalled that the encyclical *Vigilanti Cura* gave all national centers the mission of promoting good movies.¹⁷

Psychologically, we must recognize that often the condemnation of a film is enough to guarantee its success; recent experiences should have enlightened us on this point. The positive approach is more sure: to organize special showings for students, to encourage good films and ignore the others; above all, to form the personal conscience by an education in movies.

Movie Education

IN GENERAL, an increasingly generalized movie education will be the most positive and surest way of liberating today's audience from the brutalizing aspects of current movies. There is a strict connection between moral and cultural formation, and the risks of movies will diminish to the degree that the spectator is conscious of them: their harm is proportionate to the spectator's passivity. Moreover, the positive elements of a film have a greater chance of being discovered and assimilated when the spectator has been taught to look for them. A man who has been educated in the art of the cinema will choose his films, and if he happens to go to a bad one, his critical spirit will make it easy for him to discern its values.

A vast campaign for movie education should be undertaken. We are at the birth and development of a means of expression which will have repercussions similar to that of printing. An "illiterate" movie-goer is dangerous: he lacks judgment.

This new culture is still in an early stage of development. It ought little by little to be integrated at all levels of teaching, including elementary schools. It should be continued in *ciné-clubs*; these should be less and less closed cells, catering to an élite, and more the extension of the school program, becoming a school for adults.

But by a movie culture, a Christian means something more than sterile aesthetic discussions on the quality of an image, the rhythm of a sequence, or the rare beauty of an angle shot—this can be the snobbism of idlers who have nothing to say. The human problems that the movies are more and more presenting to us are as many points of interrogation on which fruitful exchanges of viewpoints and a life of commitment will give a far more solid response. The role of cultural centers is only in its beginnings.

All this should not make us ignore a pastoral effort at the same time, which would again mean giving a Christian a spirituality adapted to our time. Only a manly and profound interior life, and a formed personal conscience, will give him the needed dynamism to fortify the climate of our time.

translated by JOSEPH E. CUNNEEN

NOTES

¹ C. d. D., pp. 19-20.

² Epstein, *op cit.*, p. 231.

³ R. P. Gabel, in *Compte rendu des Semaines Sociales de Nancy*, 1955.

⁴ Emile Mâle, *L'Art religieux du 13^e siècle en France*, Ed. Armand Colin. Introduction.

⁵ Allocution to Lenten preachers, 1948.

⁶ "In addition, we must recognize that not

every religious fact or phenomenon is suitable for representation on the screen, either because of the intrinsic impossibility of showing it, or because piety and respect would forbid it" (Pius XII, Discours... *Doc. cath.*, no. 1212, col. 1415).

⁷ Cardinal Suhard, à propos of television, cited by Dubois-Dumée, in *Compte rendu des Sem. Soc. de Nancy*, 1955.

⁸ If we should not "use" this emotional shock, God can occasionally employ it to touch men with his grace. Obviously, the Spirit can blow where it will.

⁹ But without imposing it! A religious film that tried to impose its conclusions on the public, with procedures like some of the films of Cayatte, would give rise to the same responses that are met by Soviet films or an overly laudatory documentary on the American economy. The film should propose rather than impose.

¹⁰ The original reads "Saint Sulpice." (Tr.)

¹¹ André Malraux, *Musée imaginaire*, Gallimard, p. 87.

¹² "We concede therefore that even the ideal

film is able to represent evil, the offense and the fall; but let it do so with serious intentions and in appropriate forms, in such a way that its sight will help to deepen the knowledge of man's life, and to raise his spirit" (Pius XII, Discours... *Doc. cath.*, no. 1212, col. 1417).

¹³ J. L. Tallenay (movie critic for the Dominican monthly, *La Vie Intellectuelle*), responding to Martin Quigley, in *Revue Internationale du Cinéma*, 1951.

¹⁴ See Bulletin of the *IDHEC*, nos. 8, 9, 10.

¹⁵ Cf. Malines Council, 1937; also the Pastoral Letter to the Belgian Bishops, 1952 (*Revue Internationale du Cinéma*, nos. 19-20).

¹⁶ [Some people] claim that every ideal is relative, that is, that the ideal always signifies something, but only for a particular person or thing... [But] the ideal is never lacking in an absolute at its core which is realized in all cases, even in the multiplicity and variety of secondary elements" (Pius XII, Discours... *Doc. cath.*, no. 1203, col. 840).

¹⁷ *Revue Internationale du Cinéma*, nos. 19-20.

THE CLOISTER AND THE CITY (Continued from page 152)

of fervor and commitment wherever it goes and makes itself ever more genial with the geniality of love. Ductility is here a virtue of supreme detachment which hequires constant pruning: its enemies are inertia and obstinacy, from the tragic inertia with which the rich young man in the Gospels withdraws into the shadows, to the obstinacy in the righteous matter-of-factness which drove the women of France to knit in the shadow of the guillotine. Ductility is light and ever wakeful, the result of divesting oneself totally of laziness and obstinacy. But it is also alive and young, fertile and

vigorous, like all youth: it celebrates the blessings of life. Certainly it is a virtue which requires an enormous virile force and commits man to the superhuman. It is because of this that there are too few élites to multiply the silence where grace dwells in our cloisters, too few élites to multiply the dialogue of grace in the world. There are too few who walk ahead to bless life, multiplying it, so that others, following in their paths, might find meaning and savor for the hours that pass.

Translated by ELIZABETH HUGHES

ALBERT CAMUS: THE QUESTION OF HOPE

CHARLES MOELLER

"IF A GENERATION grows up without an example strong enough to motivate a complete metamorphosis," Ernst Robert Curtius wrote in 1952, "it is missing something that cannot be replaced." Certainly no author is being read more fervently by European youth than Albert Camus, the Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1957. When he went to Stockholm to receive the award, reporters commented on the impassioned discussions he carried on with young people, who must have felt that here was someone of whom they could ask the most fundamental questions. Camus, who is director of the publishing series *Espoir*, seemed almost to represent a new human hope, but surely we remain—as in the title of Tibor Mende's new book—"Between Fear and Hope."

Man's hope lies in his soul, his very breath, the resiliency of his *élan*. There is a great deal that should be said on this subject, in order to indicate the more tangible possibilities of hope before becoming absorbed in a supernatural expectation (*espérance*). But we want to make the connection between this human hope and Christian expectation; we cannot forget the two great threats to human hope—moral fragility, which constantly places the achievement of civ-

ilization in jeopardy, and the shadow of death, which brings everything to completion. It is with this problem of hope in mind that I would like to examine the work of Camus, and try to determine what kind of example he is capable of providing.

A WORK WHICH EXALTS POVERTY AND LIGHT

A human achievement is nothing more than the long road on which to find again, through the detours of art, the two or three great and simple images by which the heart, for the first time, was opened (*Nouvelle Nouvelle Revue Française* [NNRF], p. 12).

THE IMAGE upon which Sartre's eyes opened, according to Francis Jeanson, was that of a bourgeois household. Bereft of his father, brought up by his grandfather, the child felt himself surrounded by a kind of affection so excessive that it seemed to him "play acting"; he himself was unnecessary to it. The image which dominated the world of the young Camus was silent poverty. "I respect only poverty and great adventures of the mind," he was to say later on; "between the two there is only a society which is laughable." That statement was not made for rhetorical effect; it is the expression of his own childhood. Writing, in 1954, a preface for a new edition of his first work, *L'envers et l'endroit*, Camus explains further:

For myself, I know that my source is in *L'envers et l'endroit*, in that world of poverty and light where I lived a long while and the memory of which still preserves me from the two contradictory dangers which threaten every artist, resentment and complacency (NNRF, p. 2).

Abbé Charles Moeller is a professor at Louvain, and is the author of many works on literature and theology. He is now completing a five volume study, *LITTÉRATURE DU 20^E SIÈCLE ET LE CHRISTIANISME*, of which three volumes have appeared in the last four years. The present article, adapted from a talk given this February, brings his treatment of Camus (which appeared in vol. I) up to date.

Camus' father was killed in 1914 at the battle of the Marne (he was buried at Saint-Brieuc); the child grew up in an apartment in the crowded Belcourt section of Algiers; two tiny rooms sheltered an older brother, a sick uncle, a rather tyrannical grandmother who was also something of a comedian, and his mother:

Rereading *L'envers et l'endroit* after so many years, for this edition, I know instinctively, at certain pages and in spite of their awkwardness, that that's it. It, I mean—this old woman, a silent mother, poverty, the light on the Italian olive trees, a love that is solitary and yet crowded with all that bears witness, in my eyes, to the truth (NNRF, p. 9).

"At this hour my whole kingdom is of this world," he wrote in his first work. "A poor kingdom," Roger Quilliot commented, "dominated by the thin shade of a mother! She is a woman like many others, less favored than others by nature, a woman who goes out to do housework all day and returns exhausted in the evening to a hearth without a soul. She is passive, moulded over the years by her authoritarian mother." "Her life, her interests, her children limit her to just being there, a presence too natural to be felt," wrote Camus. He was to speak aloud the profound silence of this humble maternal tenderness—the same silence that he found in the faces of the poor in his squalid neighborhood. "The clamoring of a crabbed grandmother or the muteness of a resigned mother—here is the very language of poverty, that of the poor whites of the South in Caldwell, or of the Negroes in Faulkner, as well as that of our miners huddled against the wall of their company houses in silent little groups, waiting for the next mail" (Quilliot, pp. 33-34).

Thus Camus can sincerely affirm, "I did not learn about liberty in Marx;

indeed, I learned it in destitution" (Quilliot, p. 9). At the age of eighteen he was reading *La douleur*, André de Richaudeau's novel of wretchedness; but he had already seen it in the streets, in his own house. Like Péguy, he knew what care-worn existence meant, where the beauty of women passes quickly and where the "Parisian charmer" is a joke.

Fifteen thousand French francs a month, Camus exclaims in the preface to *La maison du peuple* of Louis Guilloux, fifteen thousand francs a month and Tristram no longer has anything to say to Iseult. Even love is a luxury (Quilliot, p. 34).

He came to know the tenacious patience of the poor, which is something that does not die because in it there is a reflection of the *Anakims* of the Bible; he saw the aging woman, progressively abandoned by youth, but whose "starved ardor" burns and continually awaits. He described desiccated little old men, tenacious and wretched, with all their manias—Salamono tied to his dog, the old man who spat on the cats, the asthmatic old Spaniard who incessantly counted his little peas—but also with their fidelity—like that of old Perez obstinately following the funeral procession of Meursault's mother.

The deep source of Camus' work is to be found in the vision and love of a poor mother: "The mother of Rieux, of Meursault, of Jan—all three silent, like his own. Strange source of a life with no return, obscure hearth covered by its own ashes, the mother remains for Camus more than a memory; she remains a conscience. She is the unalterable sign of an abolished childhood. However far he may go, she guarantees for us his fidelity to the world of poverty" (Quilliot, p. 43).

This fidelity to poverty has never flagged: his latest work, *Exile and the Kingdom*, seems to return entirely to this source. Here is Janine, wife of Mar-

cel, a little cloth tradesman, married almost twenty-five years: "Yet she wasn't so fat—tall and well rounded rather, plump and still desirable, as she was well aware when men looked at her, with her rather childish face, her bright, naïve eyes contrasting with this big body she knew to be warm and inviting" (p. 7). Formerly her husband took her to the beach on Sunday, where she came to know the noon times of the poor, by virtue of the truth of bodies that have been stripped of deceptive adornment, noontimes on beaches where blunt physical forcefulness reigned, noontimes of love and nude beauty" (Quilliot, p. 36). For, "on the African coast the years of youth can be happy ones. But that was twenty-five years ago; Marcel didn't much like physical effort and very soon had given up taking her to the beaches" (p. 8). Life then became a long boredom, eaten away by the haunting specter of the breadwinner, her husband's compulsion relentlessly repeated: "If something happened to me, you'd be provided for."

"The Silent Men" are workers, who must return to their joyless work after an unsuccessful strike. Among them is Yvars, who loves the sea:

"When he was twenty he never got tired of watching it, for it used to hold in store a happy week-end on the beach. Despite or because of his lameness, he had always liked swimming. Then the years had passed, there had been Fernande, the birth of the boy, and, to make ends meet, the overtime, at the shop on Saturdays and on various odd jobs on Sundays. Little by little he had lost the habit of those violent days that used to satiate him. The deep clear water, the hot sun, the girls, the physical life—there was no other form of happiness in this country. And that happiness disappeared with youth. Yvars continued to love the sea, but only at the end of the day when the water in the bay became a little darker.

The moment was pleasant on the terrace beside his house where he would sit down after work, grateful for his clean shirt that Fernande ironed so well and for the glass of anisette all frosted over. Evening would fall, the sky would become all soft and mellow, the neighbors talking with Yvars would suddenly lower their voices. At those times he didn't know whether he was happy or felt like crying. At least he felt in harmony at such moments, he had nothing to do but wait quietly, without quite knowing for what (*Exile and the Kingdom*, pp. 63-64).

We meet the Arab children whom Daru taught: actually they had all been victims because they were all poor. Every day Daru would distribute a ration to the children. They had missed it, he knew, during these bad days. Possibly one of the fathers or big brothers would come this afternoon and he could supply them with grain (p. 87).

And the last story in the collection concerns D'Arrast, the French engineer who arrives in the little town to build a dyke and thereby prevent the periodic flooding of the lower sections: "Ah, surely the poor people of Iguape would long remember the noble engineer's name and many years from now would still mention it in their prayers" (p. 170). We soon see him just as he enters a poor lodging:

In the hut, D'Arrast saw nothing at first but a dying fire built right on the ground in the exact center of the room. Then in a back corner he made out a brass bed with a bare, broken mattress, a table in the other corner covered with earthenware dishes, and, between the two, a sort of stand supporting a color print representing Saint George. Nothing else but a pile of rags to the right of the entrance and, hanging from the ceiling, a few loincloths of various colors drying over the fire. Standing still, D'Arrast breathed in the smell of smoke and poverty that rose from the ground and choked him (pp. 176-177).

"The great problems are to be found in the streets," wrote Camus; his lucidity, and also his love for the poor, caused him to discover, beneath the laughter of a pretty girl, the mask of her old age or her death-grimace" (Quilliot, p. 38).

One is apt to feel as one does when Abbé Pierre speaks on the theme "either brothers or men condemned" (apropos of the undeveloped countries), that here is the one real problem of the century.

By the same token how can we not fervently approve these words of Camus:

If, in spite of so much effort spent in purifying the language and making myths live, I do not one day succeed in re-creating *L'envers et l'endroit*, I shall never have succeeded in anything—that is my strange belief. In any case, nothing prevents my dreaming that I shall succeed, or my imagining that I still may center this work in the admirable silence of a mother and the effort of a man to rediscover a kind of love or justice equal to this silence. (NNRF, p. 12).

What does he present to us, then, of love and justice which can balance the silence of poverty? What hope can he extend to the thousands of Tristrams and Iseults who no longer have much to say to one another because they are dying of the work which is calculated to keep them alive?

First of all, a deep love of the light: Poverty has never been a misfortune for me; in it the light pours out its riches. Even my revolt has been illuminated by it. I believe I can truthfully say that my revolt has almost always been a revolt for all men, to let the life of all men be raised into the light... To correct a natural indifference I was placed at the midpoint between misery and the sun. Misery only prevented me from believing that everything is good under the sun and in history; the sun taught me that history is not everything (NNRF, pp. 2-3).

The work prior to *The Fall* is in fact marked by "carnal mean and excess"—

that of the "wedding" of man and the sea: fair and dark bodies on the sand, lightly dressed young girls renewed each summer in their premature bloom, the powdery blaze of light on the ruins of Tipasa, dry absinthe, the burning rocks over which lizards run, and the sweet soughing of the waves:

For a week, a long time ago, I lived overwhelmed by the good things of this world: we slept under the sky on a beach, I nourished myself on fruit, and I spent half my days in the deserted water. I learned at that time a truth which has since always moved me to perceive the marks of comfort, or of settling down, with irony, impatience, and sometimes with fury... I was miserly of that freedom which disappears as soon as an excess of goods appears. For me the greatest luxury always coincides with a certain denudation. I love the bare houses of the Arabs and Spaniards (NNRF, pp. 4-5).

We come to see that this sort of "Franciscan poverty," at the breast of generous nature, was the dream of Janine and Yvars in *Exile and the Kingdom*. A happiness of the senses is the only kind of happiness that can be conferred upon men, and it justifies any sacrifice. We see this light extend to more and more profound areas in Camus' work: at first a romanticism of solar happiness, it becomes a religion of happiness. It is "secularist" of course, but it has its "men of good will": Rieux, who struggles honestly for the health of the people of Oran; Rambert, who discovers that it would be shameful to be happy all alone. It also knows its "saints," without God, in Tarrou. It has its "martyrs," in Kalyaev, who dies on the scaffold to assure to men freed by the revolution a "summer" of happiness, while he and Dora feel themselves caught in the ice of an interminable winter of grief.

Our contemporary youth loves immediate happiness, preferring to seek it on ski slopes or on beaches, where one

is not concerned with dressing or burdened with too much introspection. It likes the title Roger Quilliot gave to his essay on Camus, *The Sea and the Prisons*, because it is haunted by the prisonhouse of the undeveloped countries and starved for a life of freedom. The "noontime thought" which pits itself against the Moloch of revolution and sustains a modest and patient revolt against men's unhappiness, has, in Camus' work, no common ground with the *juste milieu* which would arrange the busts of Corneille and Racine on the mantels of literary salons. It resembles the light of lanterns on the roadway, lighting up the necessary fifty meters. It rejects the "isms" in the name of which the first half of the 20th century has been made an antechamber of hell: fascism, liberalism, nazism, Marxism.

THE SHADOW OF DEATH

WHAT THE CRITICS like in Camus is the hope in *this* life which many of his characters possess. In a special Camus issue of *Livres de France* (Dec. 1957), Émile Henriot writes:

The Stranger, that novel of negation and despair, would have been simply unbearable, if at the same time Albert Camus had not shown, in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, that man was capable of rediscovering a morality by reflecting on the nobility of the human struggle taken in itself, and with no final end other than itself, and of the stoic acceptance of that courage, in taking this burden on himself and bearing it voluntarily; destiny was a man's affair, to be decided between men. In *The Plague* Camus rediscovered that brotherly love among men which Christianity calls charity, and confronted with the practice of this virtue detached from any metaphysical foundation, raised the moving question as to whether, though restricted to the closed world of men, there can be a holiness of men with-

out the hope of a reward, a secular goodness without God. Camus, who wants only to be a man, and who knows nothing but this world, has proceeded unflinchingly to the logical end of his agnosticism. No supernatural hope illuminates his path. But his noble preoccupation with the theme of good and evil is that of a mind which, even if without "religion," remains religious, although not touched by grace (p. 4).

This is quite correct. But death is no less real for all that. When one is very young, and has been fortunate enough to first see daylight in a sun-lit land, it is possible to unite poverty and light. But ever since 1938, when he returned from his trip to make a report on the Kabyles, Camus has understood that a certain type of poverty is a permanent interdict on the beauty of Mediterranean countries:

There we watched the descent of night. And at that hour, when the shadow which drops from the mountains down to this shining earth causes a stir in the most hardened heart, I realized that there was no peace for those who, on the other side of the valley, were gathering for a meal of pancakes, made from bad barley. I realized too that it would be sweet to abandon oneself to this night of splendor and surprise, but that the lighted fires of destitution which blazed before us were like an interdict placed on the beauty of the world (Quilliot, p. 149).

When poverty is added to the drabness of overcrowded cities, when men are in the grip of what Saint-Exupéry called "a machine to stamp out men as if they were pieces of metal," then it is responsible for many "murdered Mozarts." Camus says this directly in the dense preface he wrote for the 1954 edition of *l'Envers et L'endroit*:

When poverty is linked with a life without sky or hope—such as I saw as a young man in the terrible slums

of our cities—then the ultimate and most revolting injustice is consummated: everything must be done so that man may escape the double humiliation of destitution and ugliness. Even though born a poor man in a poor quarter of the city, I did not know what true tragedy was until I saw our cold slums in factory towns. Not even the most abject Arab destitution can match it, beneath such a different sky. When you have experienced these industrialized neighborhoods, you feel soiled once and for all, and, I believe, responsible for their existence (NNRF, p. 4).

But it is not enough to feel "responsible," we must know what remedy to offer. Surely none of those "concrete universals" which are called syndicalism, workers' rights, guaranteed vacations, and increased leisure time can afford to be neglected. Nevertheless, even if all these proletarian camps were to be turned into cities of sun, and hunger and cold lost all dominion over men, what would survive of hope for men, since they will still be alone, and looking forward to death?

We just cited several passages from *Exile and the Kingdom* which evoked the joy of sun-covered beaches, but Camus concedes that this kind of happiness dies with youth. What else is left for Janine in this grey life, except to follow behind her busy husband in the cold tracks of the oasis?

She was waiting, but she didn't know for what. She was aware only of her solitude, and the penetrating cold, and of a greater weight in the region of the heart... She was standing, heavy, with dangling arms, slightly stooped, as the cold climbed her thick legs. She was dreaming of the erect and flexible palm trees and of the girl she had once been (p. 14).

Towards the end of the same afternoon, on the battlements of the fort, she contemplates the desert. In the distance she sees some nomads, beggar lords of a

strange kingdom, and for a moment's ecstasy she believes she understands this "dry land, stripped to the bone." But the ecstasy of nothingness is to no avail against the fear of death which makes her clutch Marcel's shoulder:

Then she dragged herself toward her bed, where Marcel came to join her and put the light out at once without asking anything of her.... She could feel only Marcel's warmth. For more than twenty years every night thus, in his warmth, just the two of them, even when ill, even when traveling, as at present... Besides, what would she have done alone at home? No child! Wasn't that what she lacked? She didn't know. She simply followed Marcel, pleased to know that someone needed her. The only joy he gave her was the knowledge that she was necessary... They made love in the dark by feel, without seeing each other. Is there another love than that of darkness, a love that would cry aloud in daylight? She didn't know, but she did know that Marcel needed her and she needed that need, that she lived on it night and day, at night especially—every night, when he didn't want to be alone, or to age or die, with that set expression he assumed which she occasionally recognized on other men's faces, the only common expression of those madmen hiding under an appearance of wisdom until the madness seizes them and hurls them desperately toward a woman's body to bury in it, without desire, everything terrifying that solitude and night reveals to them (pp. 26-28).

In this we are far from the sun-lit beaches; Janine is no longer the young girl who believes in death only "for others," and who imagines that the stuff of life is inexhaustible and that an accidental slip of the scissors can be remedied; she is beyond that young hope which came as easily as breathing—in one's thirties, Camus writes, it diminishes imperceptibly; she has arrived at winter where life throws off its petrified mask:

She cuddled a little closer and put her hand on his chest. And to herself she called him with the little love-name she had once given him, which they still used from time to time without even thinking of what they were saying.

She called him with all her heart. After all, she too needed him, his strength, his little eccentricities, and she too was afraid of death. "If I could overcome that fear, I'd be happy..." Immediately, a nameless anguish seized her. She drew back from Marcel. No, she was overcoming nothing, she was not happy, she was going to die, in truth, without having been liberated (pp. 28-29).

The work of Camus has come to a crossroad; the anguish of dying has become simpler and more profound, and at the same time the accent on poverty has become stronger: the result is that the problem—the absence of hope—is all the more urgent. We want to know the meaning of this story of man, which in the eyes of the last man on earth, even if he were to be some sort of demi-urge, would appear as "a tragedy for those who feel and a comedy for those who think." We want to know, not just out of concern for our corruptible bodies, but because of our efforts to give bread and justice to the poor, because of that love, which yearns for immortality, and has made so many Janines throw themselves on the bodies of so many Marcells. What is the point of this story, this "route that has been lost in the fog"? What answer are we to offer to those faces of men "hiding under an appearance of wisdom until the madness strikes them"?

It is at this point that the thought of someone like Teilhard de Chardin—whatever problems it may pose for scientists, philosophers or theologians—can mark out a direction for those souls who are passionately concerned for "the glory of the earth," and whose "kingdom is in this world." Such men will be able

to accept Jesus only on the day when they can see reflected in him the power of reconciliation belonging to the religious man, and "that earthly face" which the best poets and thinkers have loved so much. To say that, for Camus, the soul is at the intersection of the urge to live and the fear of death is to understand something of the desire for eternity that animates him. But if it is added, in agreement with Quilliot, that the soul is situated "at that precise point where clear-sightedness gives us a detachment in regard to both these urges" (p. 55), then we are saying that man is great only in his victory over the fear of death, without accepting his own death. This victory, however, does not resolve the problem of the immense effort of life, which is meaningless if it falls into nothingness, unless it is the prelude of an immortal Psyché, or rather, of the resurrection.

The first triptych of Camus' work was rather negative, Quilliot says: a short novel, (*The Stranger*), a play (*Caligula*), and an essay (*The Myth of Sisyphus*), were a defense of hope against the absurd. The second triptych was positive: a novel (*The Plague*), a play (*The Just*), an essay (*The Rebel*), outlined "the religion of happiness" to which everyone must be sacrificed. Two collections of poetic texts, *Noces* (1937) and *Summer* (1954) flanked the edifice with their harmonious lyricism. The third panel, on which Camus is presently working, will be devoted to love: a novel (*The First Man*), a play (*Doctor Juan*), and an essay, (*The Myth of Nemesis*). But between the second triptych which is finished and the third which is in process, has not the balance been disturbed by an unforeseen question? What is the meaning of love if it expires along with our death? This question, which haunted Unamuno and for which he was reproached by his atheist friends, has attached itself to the

hinges of Camus' work. We need only recall the biblical text, "God did not will death," to become aware of the new world which hope opens up to us, when it is relieved by Christian expectation.

THE SHADOW OF EVIL

WE HAVE SEEN that the problem of unhappiness remains unanswered. With *The Fall*, Camus takes up the problem of evil, which is even more urgent. Like a grain of sand which could cause the breakdown of a well-oiled machine, the question of man's moral frailty is unavoidably posed by the ambiguous character of Clamence.

Camus considers *The Fall* as a purely satirical work, since, in an interview in *Le Monde* (Aug. 31, 1956), he said:

I would have liked to entitle this book *A Hero of Our Time*. At the beginning it was only a short story planned to appear the following January in a collection called *Exile and the Kingdom*. But I was carried away by my subject, in trying to present the portrait of one of those minor prophets who are so common these days. They announce nothing at all and find nothing better to do than accuse others by accusing themselves.

Nevertheless, in the satirical traits which we will discuss, how can we fail to see the appearance of a wickedness deep in the bones of men? Clamence cries out his disgust with a freezing irony, an irony which according to Camus marks all his work, through which he flogs the pharisaism of society today. The Frenchman has two manias, ideas and fornication—nevertheless, the average European is no better, and some day it will be said of him: "He fornicated and read the papers" (pp. 6-7). Bourgeois institutions are killing because of their usury; "certain marriages, which are merely formalized debauches, become the monotonous hearses of daring

and invention. Yes, cher ami, bourgeois marriage has put our country into slippers and will soon lead it to the gates of death" (p. 106). Professional and family life, even leisure, too often resemble those millions of tiny fish which attack the unwary swimmer in Brazilian rivers, and reduce him to a skeleton within a matter of minutes. When Clamence merely says "Thank God" in front of our café atheists: "A moment of amazement would follow that outrageous expression, they would look at one another dumfounded, then the tumult would burst forth. Some would flee the café, others would gabble indignantly without listening to anything; and all would writhe in convulsions like the devil in holy water" (p. 93). In such a world of mocking wickedness, there is the lyricism of the prison camp: "We children of the mid-century don't need a diagram to imagine such places. A hundred and fifty years ago, people became sentimental about lakes and forests" (pp. 123-4). And Camus emphasizes that further hypocrisy which makes us judge and condemn others: "Today we are always ready to judge as we are to fornicate. With this difference, that there are no inadequacies to fear" (p. 77).

This misanthropic rage is only the reverse side of an interior wound. This great lawyer who won all his cases, this child of mountain peaks and high bridges who felt at his ease only within his skin, who experienced no joy but that of his body, this man who frankly admits that what he liked in love was "only what one did"—surely it was necessary that one day he would have to contemplate his real self. Like Augustine of Tagaste, who was pulled back by the voice of a child who said, "Take and read," and was forced to see himself as a sensual rhetorician and the cause of his mother's tears, Clamence too experienced his "moment of truth," that instant in which we know, as Montaigne

said, whether what we affirm comes from our mouth or our stomach.

It was not a child who robbed Clamence of his illusion of virtue, but a laugh, a simple, frank healthy laugh, which he heard one night as he went past a bridge over the Seine; it seemed to mock the fine window-dummy who strolled through the streets of Paris, and seemed to say, "A man like you, *voyons*..." The memory of this laugh forced itself upon him three years later:

Look, the rain has stopped! Be kind enough to walk home with me. I am strangely tired, not from having talked so much but at the mere thought of what I still have to say. Oh, well, a few words will suffice to relate my essential discovery. What's the use of saying more, anyway? For the statue to stand bare, the fine speeches must take flight like pigeons. So here goes. That particular night in November, two or three years before the evening when I thought I heard laughter behind me, I was returning to the Left Bank and my home by way of the Pont Royal. It was an hour past midnight, a fine rain was falling, a drizzle rather, that scattered the few people on the streets. I had just left a mistress, who was surely already asleep. I was enjoying the walk, a little numbed, my body calmed and irrigated by a flow of blood gentle as the falling rain. On the bridge I passed behind a figure leaning over the railing and seeming to stare at the river. On closer view, I made out a slim young woman dressed in black. The back of her neck, cool and damp between her dark hair and coat collar, stirred me. But I went on after a moment's hesitation. At the end of the bridge I followed the quays toward Saint-Michel, where I lived. I had already gone some fifty yards when I heard the sound—which, despite the distance, seemed dreadfully loud in the midnight silence—of a body striking the water. I stopped short, but without turning around. Almost at once I heard a cry, repeated several times, which was going downstream; then it suddenly ceased. The silence

that followed, as the night suddenly stood still, seemed interminable. I wanted to run and yet didn't stir. I was trembling, I believe from cold and shock. I told myself that I had to be quick and I felt an irresistible weakness steal over me. I have forgotten what I thought then. "Too late, too far..." or something of the sort. I was still listening as I stood motionless. Then, slowly under the rain, I went away. I informed no one.

But here we are; here's my house, my shelter! Tomorrow? Yes, if you wish. I'd like to take you to the island of Marken so you can see the Zuider Zee. Let's meet at eleven at *Mexico City*. What? That woman? Oh, I don't know. Really I don't know. The next day, and the days following, I didn't read the papers (pp. 69-71).

Of course, we do not have the opportunity every day to save someone who is drowning. But, as Ivan Karamazov said, "Which one of us here, gentlemen, has not wanted to kill his father?" Can we not equally recognize ourselves in Duhamel's Salavin, the young office boy who wanted to be a saint, and who wrote in his diary: "Monday, nothing; Tuesday, nothing; Wednesday, again nothing; Thursday, still nothing." It went on in this way until one day he goes to his neighborhood movie theater. That very morning he had dreamed of some great crisis, like a shipwreck, which would be the longed-for opportunity of his life. The banal film that he watches seems real to him. Suddenly fire breaks out in the theater. And he, the long-delayed saint, pushes his neighbors aside, even knocks down something—or someone—and finds himself outside safe, and a lost man.

We are uneasy when we are reminded of such weakness. Duhamel and Camus know that "Revolutions will not change man's conscience"; Salavin insists that man must be converted, that he must change the very source of his acts, "man's heart from which both his good and his

bad thought derive"; he must expose the secret places of his own conscience which only God's glance can observe and transfigure. Clamence's story tells us that there is a limit which cannot be exceeded. When someone asked Salavin why he is so concerned about being changed,

Salavin lowered his head and said, very softly, "Because . . . because I am a coward." Then the whole company was silent, as if something extremely embarrassing had been said . . . Salavin fell back on his seat like a man who has been judged (*Club des Lyonnais*, pp. 159-60).

For Émile Henriot, *The Fall* would seem to be a similar false note:

Camus is sometimes sarcastic, and in his noble ascension from one book to another, it is only in his next to last book, *The Fall*, that he has failed to find the next rung of the ladder. Because the central figure is a scoundrel, there is an exaggerated pessimism, which has caused Camus blindly to incriminate all men in the same guilt. It is almost as if this atheist shared a belief in an original sin from which no man would be exempt. It is the only part of his work where one cannot follow him (*Livres de France*, December 1957, pp. 5-6).

For myself, I wonder if it is not precisely here that Camus is to be followed.

Of course Camus knows that all men are not cowards or judges who condemn life. In *Exile and the Kingdom* there is D'Arrast who takes up the enormous stone that another could no longer carry; there is Daru who refuses to judge the Arab; there is the humble Jonas who allows himself—like his biblical ancestor—to be thrown into the sea, to be deprived of his art work, since "it is because of him that this great calamity has come upon us." But certainly the theme of exile is given greater emphasis than that of the kingdom, and the moral agony is made so lacerating in *The Fall* that the gestures of solidarity made by

D'Arrast, Daru and Jonas may not convince us. How could these men succeed in loving when Clamence could not? Did they then complete the "descent into hell" that the "judge-penitent" forces us to make with him? Their solidarity may seem to us an illusion. And if they have made this exploration of the depths of cowardice which lie in all of us, how have they succeeded in rediscovering the simple glance of the man who holds out his hand to his brother? It is the end of the story Clamence wants to understand. How could he become again a Tarrou, a Rieux, a Kalyaev, since he knows he is a coward, and brags of his superficiality? He is a cynical accomplice and says so out loud; he makes us shudder; he is a detestable scoundrel; but with Baudelaire we know that he is "like us, our brother." These stories in *Exile and the Kingdom* seem to belong to an earlier geological period. An earthquake has occurred with Clamence's confession; from now on we may perhaps speak of *The Fall* as constituting a dividing line in Camus' work. It is the post-Fall Camus whom we are waiting for, and for whom we would have the most intense questions.

THE SHADOWS OF THOSE WE HAVE KILLED

ALL THIS WILL NOT prevent some Philinthe from trying to prove to us that, after all, men are wicked only when they want an impossible purity, and that apart from such attempts, they are able to succeed. This means that we should sacrifice our "half-vices" on the altar of "classical wisdom," and in this way we will save our "half-virtues"; we may then agree with Henriot that Clamence is a scoundrel and that "we have nothing in common with that sort," at least not much.

But even if we can accept the evil that we have to undergo, the evil that

we do to others keeps us from enjoying our meals. Clamence's story brings up the problem of conversion, surely, but it also evokes the shadows of those we have allowed to die. It confronts us with the problem, or rather, the mystery, of how to do reparation for the evil that we have done.

That unknown girl whom he had encountered by the river, whom he had momentarily desired, Clamence had heard her cry, and then fall in the cold dark water with a muffled sound; the "great lawyer," who had saved all his clients, had not saved her. Beyond his sarcasm, with which he tries to distract himself, Clamence constantly finds again the living figure of this girl, and his saddest secret is at the end of his monologue, when he admits it:

Then please tell me what happened to you one night on the quays of the Seine and how you managed never to risk your life. You yourself utter the words that for years have never ceased echoing through my nights and that I shall at last say through your mouth: "O young woman, throw yourself into the water again so that I may have the chance of saving both of us!" (p. 147).

In these words Clamence is expressing our agony when we realize how much we are responsible for everyone, to what extent our most secret thoughts poison the air of others without our knowing it, and help create temptations to despair or even murder. In the face of this problem of reparation, which is both necessary and impossible when the person we have killed is gone for ever, "classical wisdom" becomes ludicrous.

We are at the point that Graham Greene called *The Heart of the Matter*. Similarly, in the last scene of *Requiem for a Nun*, when Temple asks Nancy Mannigoe, "Is there any place in the world where children could forgive us?", she is expressing Clamence's supreme agony. The wheel of time never goes

backward; that cool neck and that muffled sound will always haunt the sleep of the judge-penitent; the hands which choked a six months-old baby will always prevent Temple from finding peace. Clamence admits that he was called, but he didn't listen. All the perfumes of Araby can never remove the stain which for years will keep Temple from sleeping: "Macbeth will sleep no more."

Unless there is a God who gives pardon, and can take away the sting that poisons Clamence's bitterness, unless a divine power could help us find our past again, free it from the darkness of "Never more," and restore fluidity to a life which is reborn There could be repentance to a God who, through his eternal life, in which our own existences are present, could deliver us from the deadly spell of our past acts. How many vocations of saints have begun by this discovery of previous cowardice!

But it is not enough for God to pardon us; we also want to save those whom we caused to be lost. We are ready to offer him anything if he will receive into his mercy those whom we have abandoned here below. There has to be a place "where our children will no longer remember the hands that have choked them." This is what Nancy says to Temple:

You are not alone . . . We need only believe in Him, because of what He is. I don't understand everything He says, but I love Him because they killed Him. You ran away because you love what is wrong, like me. I was like that. And He cannot prevent us from desiring evil. But, in order to make up a little, He has invented suffering which is the light of the poor world. He it is who will pardon us, for there is surely a place somewhere, where your child will remember nothing, not even those hands that choked her.

One can hardly describe "paradise" better than this, not as a place, but a state, or better yet, as a kingdom.

This speech is Faulkner's, not Camus.' The latter has insisted that adapting *Requiem for a Nun* did not mean that he was converted. He told a reporter for *Dagens Nyheter* what he thought of religion in December 1957:

I have an awareness of the sacred, of the mystery that exists in man, and I see no reason for not admitting the emotion that I feel for Christ and his teaching. Unfortunately, I am afraid that in certain areas, especially in Europe, the admission of ignorance, of a limit to man's knowledge and a respect for the sacred, will appear simply as a weakness. If it is, I fully accept it. I have only respect and veneration for the person and the life of Christ; I do not believe in his resurrection.

There are many passages in *The Fall* which show Camus' admiration for Christ; and in *Exile and the Kingdom* for example, we find in "The Renegade":

'Here is my Lord, just look at him, he never strikes or kills, he issues his orders in a low voice, he turns the other cheek, choose him . . . ' (p. 36).

and later, in "The Growing Stone," this bit of dialogue between the cook and D'Arrast:

"You are a captain," he said. "My house is yours. Besides, you are going to help me keep my promise, and it's as if you had made it yourself. That will help you too."

D'Arrast smiled saying, "I don't think so."

"You are proud, Captain."

"I used to be proud; now I'm alone. But just tell me: has your good Jesus always answered you?"

"Always . . . no, Captain!"

"Well, then?"

The cook burst out with a gay, childlike laugh.

"Well," he said, "he's free, isn't he?" (p. 187).

The simple frankness of the last words recall the faith of those who have gone to Lourdes asking to be cured, and re-

turn, still sick but without bitterness. This is the real miracle of faith, which restores the dead to life.

We realize that, "cut off from his divine ascendance, Christ becomes for Camus what he was for Alfred de Vigny, the highest incarnation of solitude and human grandeur" (Quilliot, pp. 103-4). He himself said, "My lack of imagination forbids me to go any further"; he gives these words to Clamence, and has Nancy Mannigoe say (a line which is not in Faulkner's text): "I love him, my friend, who died without knowing it." This expresses both the admiration Camus feels for the humanity of Christ, and for everything human which radiates from him, and also the limit beyond which he cannot go.

But must we not begin, like the apostles, by being struck by the radiance of the man Jesus? Is it not moving to discover the place—modest, perhaps, but quite visible—that this countenance has in Camus' work? It appears that the hypocrisy and cowardice which, rightly or wrongly, he finds in our society today, brings him to discover, by contrast, the sweetness of that man "who asks only one thing, that we love," and who says to the woman taken in adultery, "Go, I do not condemn you."

Camus' disbelief has none of that intellectual bitterness and sharp spirit of competition which obsess Sartre.

It is true that I do not believe in God. But that does not mean I am an atheist. I would be in agreement with Benjamin Constant in finding irreligion rather vulgar and trite (*Le Monde*, Aug. 31, 1956).

Camus' thought should be an appeal to our own fidelity; let us not try too hard to baptize it at any cost. With Camus, let us love the poor; give them light—and first of all, that of the sun, which is also a creature of God. If the shadow of death, the fascination of evil, or especially despair at not being able

to make reparation for evil weigh on the recent characters of Camus, let us make sure that our response to these concerns bears witness to something more than an abstract ready-answer, or a quick paste job to hide the holes in our pet system.

At the end of his preface to the new edition of *L'envers et l'endroit*, Camus

says: "After 25 years of writing, I continue to live with the idea that my work has not even begun" (*NNRF*, p. 12). It seems to me that this is so. After beginning with a question, his work approached a kind of serenity; now a new question appears, the question of hope in the face of death.

translated by E. S., L. K., S. H., J. C.

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Notes on other Publications

THE POLITICAL-CULTURAL SCENE

1.

Russia. The world-wide excitement that George F. Kennan occasioned by his British Broadcasting Corporation Reith lectures during the past winter revealed a sound public wish for a new approach to the Soviet question. It is not that the scholarly ex-diplomat has offered an easy way out of the armament race, but he has set forth the problems in such a brilliant, original and clear manner as to compel a re-thinking of foreign, military and even domestic policies.

The publishers have performed a valuable service in making the lectures available so soon. (*Russia, the Atom and the West*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958. Pp vii, 116. \$2.50) In addition to the lectures, Kennan has added a chapter on Anglo-American relations which shows insight into contemporary English psychology and provides as well a brief but most adequate analysis of the present American social picture. Kennan's style of writing is so civilised, and the working of his mind so intelligent, he is able to deal with standard themes without once using a hackneyed expression. This is the creative kind of work which will be used by countless lesser minds in addresses, editorials and books until the greater part of it becomes a series of clichés.

A number of critics have attacked his suggestions that alternatives to an armed Germany and strong American forces in Europe be considered. Some have pictured him as a rather dangerous isolationist, whose ideas if adopted would weaken seriously the military position of the West. Now these are matters so important, I am sure Kennan would

be the first to admit his proposals should be debated, on every level. And he is modest enough to see that here we shall always be in the realm of the uncertain.

Isolationists will find much with which they will agree. Kennan urges that since the United States is not a European power, it is wrong to expect her to keep her forces on the Continent indefinitely; Europeans should work out their political problems in their own way. The present situation of subordinating everything to the atomic weapon race, with the possibility of smaller allied countries on both sides having the same weapons, can lead only to disaster. The answer lies in:

the possibility of separating geographically the forces of the great nuclear powers, of excluding them as direct factors in the future development of political relationships on the Continent, and of inducing the continental peoples, by the same token, to accept a higher level of responsibility for the defense of the Continent than they have recently borne.

But this defense should be without atomic weapons. Furthermore, the danger from the Soviet is not primarily military, it is political. Far more important than military force is the "internal health and discipline of the respective national societies."

Yet it would be a distortion of Kennan's position to classify him as an isolationist, at least in the traditional sense. He is well aware of American responsibilities, and by no means suggests that our build-up of defense should be reduced. His point is that the Soviet Union cannot give up its military position in Eastern Europe without the United States withdrawing its own forces. Only then could Germany be re-united,

while only with a powerless Germany would the Soviets be induced to withdraw from the satellite nations.

While acknowledging Communist cosmic dreams, Kennan nevertheless points out that Soviet leaders shun atomic war and dislike expenditures for atomic weapons as much as does the United States. If the military threat can be reduced, then the struggle can take its natural course—in political, social and economic competition.

It is interesting to see that he has not joined the band-wagon for a summit meeting. As an experienced diplomat as well as trained historian, he is alive to the propaganda objectives of current Soviet summit demands. Normal diplomatic channels should be used to make our position clear. The only point of a formal meeting between the heads of states is to ratify previously arranged agreements.

In his attitude to the Middle East and the Far East, Kennan again delights the isolationist mind. The situation in the Middle East is such that peace is not to be expected. It would be foolish for the United States or Russia to so identify itself with any interests in the Middle East as to bring about a world-wide war. In so far as possible we should try to make ourselves entirely independent of the resources of that area.

Since most of the book concerns Europe, the discussion of the Far East is not at all complete. But he does make clear his doubt concerning foreign aid as a panacea. The immediate industrialisation of the Far East is no answer to the deep psychological problems of the people of that part of the world. He is not alarmed when eastern nations turn to the Soviet for aid. If they are going to go Communist, let them—they have more to lose in this than we have. Besides, their leaders are more canny than we realise. And why not let the Soviet bear some of the burden for the support of

these new industrial programs?

What gives depth to the book is not only its discussion of the military and diplomatic situation, but its analysis of domestic issues both in the United States and in the Soviet Union. Diplomacy is not seen in isolation from the nature of society itself. A chapter on the internal scene in Russia, for example, discusses in an intriguing way the problems arising in the Soviet because of the aspirations of its new educated class, and from industrialisation.

Kennan's approach is that of the cultivated humanist, anxious to find some way to reduce the absurd, destructive animosity between the Soviet Union and the western world. He is an idealist, but one who lives in a very concrete world where abstractions have to be realised through countless particulars, most of them of a most complex and irritating nature. I found his book convincing, although most other reviewers do not agree. But no one has questioned his service in getting us all to think.

(F. A. W.)

2.

Worldview. This is the title of a modest but significant contribution to the understanding of foreign affairs, published monthly by the Church Peace Union (170 East 64th St., New York 21, N.Y., \$2 a year), and edited by William Clancy. *WORLDVIEW* is successor to the *WORLD ALLIANCE NEWS LETTER*, and describes itself as "a journal of ethics and foreign affairs." Early issues have contained articles by William Lee Miller, M. A. Fitzsimmons, James T. Farrell, William Pfaff, Will Herberg, and Gustave Weigel.

Although this valuable monthly will give hospitality to a range of opinions on foreign policy, it is worth noting that the Church Peace Union did distribute Ernest W. Lefever's *Ethics and United*

States Foreign Policy (Meridian), and this study, which begins with a critical attitude to U.S. policy at the time of the Suez invasion, would seem to be required reading for those who would understand the basic assumptions of *WORLDVIEW*.

Criticisms of the first issue (cf. the letters printed in the March issue), are echoed in the friendly criticism from the *CHRISTIAN CENTURY* editorialist who feels that Lefever has reduced the justly-esteemed "Christian realism" of Reinhold Niebuhr to a new dogmatism, or perhaps a new series of clichés. (Niebuhr himself reviewed Lefever's study quite favorably in *THE NEW LEADER*.) Certainly, although there is a strong attack on Dulles' "moralism," it is not at all clear what alternative Lefever has in mind.

(J. E. C.)

3.

Poland. Despite the delicacy of the international situation in Poland, which, if anything, seems to have increased since the publication of the Document on Poland (Winter 1957, *CROSS CURRENTS*), one encouraging note is the increase of Catholic intellectual activity. For example, we discover in recent issues of the monthly *ZNAK* (Kraków, ul. Elawkowska 32, I p.) a continuing inquiry into the formation of Polish Catholics in the period between World Wars I and II, articles on "Mechanism of Vitalism" (by Abbé Romuald Zaniewski), on the reasons for the decline of Thomism (by Stefan Swiezawski), and reflections on the Decalogue by Abbé Jan Pieraszko. There are also translations into Polish of material by Georges Bernanos, Simone Weil, Abbé Pierre, Thomas Merton and Erwin Panofsky. Contacts with American scholars and libraries, and contributions of American books and journals, would be appreciated.

Swiezawski, who is on the staff of *ZNAK*, is also involved in a controversy because of his article in *TYGODNIK POWSZECHNY*, a Catholic weekly, which raised the question of the attitude the Church should adopt toward unbelievers. His defense of a policy which would emphasize tolerance would seem to give theoretical underpinning to the Catholic Parliamentary group under Stanislaw Stomma, which has maintained a freedom of criticism within a framework of loyalty to the present government. The monthly *HOMO DEI* replied with an article by Jozef Swiecicki, attacking Swiezawski's notion of "tolerance" as inspired by contemporary French Catholicism, and without foundation in traditional doctrine. (cf. *N.Y. TIMES*, 4/27/58.)

(F. X. Q.)

4.

Germany. The October *HOCHLAND* presents a brief but deeply concerned criticism of German Catholicism today, which would make the American reader more suspicious of the Adenauer electoral victory celebration. Special importance is given to the warning as it is written by the distinguished editor, Franz Josef Schoeningh, and appeared as the opening note in *HOCHLAND*'s 50th year of publication.

Schoeningh was especially disturbed by the role of "the Church" in the 1957 elections. He feels that German Catholicism is beginning to act from purely political motives, just as it did up till 1933, and that it seems to have forgotten the lesson that only a profoundly religious commitment could withstand National Socialism.

Economic conditions in West Germany have improved so rapidly that Christians are lulling themselves into the belief that this is the way things really are and always will be; all the old divisions between Catholics and Protestants are being revived, "Yet in

Magdeburg there are today neither Catholic nor Protestant but only Soviet canon."

Men who died under Hitler would not have believed that the question, "Can a Catholic be a socialist?" could be raised again. English Catholics, for example, would consider it beyond the authority of the Church to tell them they could not belong to the Labor Party. The comment has added strength coming from HOCHLAND, since this monthly, one of the most deeply-concerned Catholic journals of our time, is largely non-political, and has no particular tendency to socialism. (S. S. C.)

5.

North and South. (Howard R. Floan. *The South in Northern Eyes 1831-1861.* University of Texas Press, xi & 198 pp. \$3.95.) In this brief yet encompassing report on the attitudes expounded toward the South from 1831 to 1861, Professor Floan has explored the psychological conditioning which prepared the North for its entrance into the Civil War. The power of the pen in popularizing an image of the antebellum South is studied in New England through the writings of Whittier, Lowell, Emerson, Thoreau, and Longfellow, and in New York through the work of Melville, Bryant, and Whitman. On the whole, the latter group presented a truer picture of conditions in the South than did the distorted delineation of the former, who identified the slaveholding plantation aristocracy with the entire South.

Professor Floan's book, scholarly, dispassionate, and yet often suggestive in its implications, needed to be written not only as an historical corrective to a view which still persists among many Northerners, but also as a compendium of a significant segment of literary thought during the "American Renaissance." Without countenancing the basic

immorality of slavery, the author performs the always needful task of separating fact from fancy and knowledge from hearsay in the works of men who form a major part of our cultural heritage. On that ground alone, he deserves our thanks. (J. C.)

6.

Dante. (Bernard Stambler. *Dante's Other World. The "Purgatorio" as Guide to the "Divine Comedy."* New York University Press, 1957. XVIII & 392 pp. \$6.50.) When Catholic scholars concentrate on the interpretation of the *Purgatorio* rather than on that of the *Inferno* or *Paradiso*, it is because they feel with Dante: "Hic tua res agitur." Dante like his Catholic reader knows that the unavoidable destiny of the non-saint is the obligation to atone there for his omissions in this life. Nevertheless he desperately tries to avoid such a painful satisfaction by indulgences and works of piety. In the same way, he tries to help to rescue others who are supposed to suffer already in Purgatory because of the same lack of due cooperation with grace during their life time. When by a striking coincidence two non-Catholic critics like Fergusson and Stambler have chosen the *Purgatorio* as their object of study in recent years, the reason is different: They are glad to discover that there is in Dante's *Purgatorio* "a human revelation of the clarity and scope possible for the human mind," so different in its "highest soaring" from the "doubt, murkiness, moral ambiguity, uncertainty of duty or goal or value" which we take in when reading "Joyce and Kafka, Eliot and Rimbaud" (p. 300).

And yet, in contradiction to Fergusson's concept of the *Purgatorio* as a "drama of the mind," Stambler does not try to modernize but to understand the *Purgatorio*, to explain its spirit and structure to others. Stambler's introduction

is scholarly and popular at the same time, pedagogically excellent and in many details of interpretation intelligently original. Our reservations would concern Dante's allegedly standing "between" orthodoxy and heterodoxy, a somewhat uncritical use of secondary sources, and such formulations as: "Dantean extensions of Orthodoxy," "the Church and Dante differed," "wholly human Mary," "the spirits [in purgatory] are comfortable," "the compline hymn, a vesper song," "the congregation of the Church."

Everything a Dante reader must know as background is nicely packed in a first chapter: Medieval theology and philosophy: fourfold meaning of the Scriptures, among whose initiators one misses the name of St. Paul; Courtly love, Andreas the Chaplain; *Dolce stil nuovo*; distinction of allegory, symbol, analogy, image; allegory of the poet versus allegory of the theologian; the structure of Dante's poem, his cosmology, astronomy, astrology, etc. In thirteen further chapters the cantos are very well grouped. This grouping, in itself an asset, is made more helpful by reasonable bridges from one unit to the other and particularly so by the attempt to find a nucleus ("right measure") for the corresponding virtues and vices presented as incentives (goads) and shameful disgraces (deterrents or checks) to the suffering souls. Thus the instinct of eating, thinks Stambler, produces gluttony as well as asceticism, the instinct of sex produces lust (when cerebralized) as well as fatherhood (when left in its functional sphere). The interpretation coming from such reasonable auxiliary construction is always smooth and illuminating, especially when suggestions are fully developed, —e.g., that fatherhood has its guiding limits and therefore Virgil has to abandon the spiritually adolescent Dante to more motherly and womanly forces, Beatrice. Stambler is also very good on the

linkage of certain motifs (Dante's dream), or images, or the interplay between the static and the dynamic elements, e.g., that on each terrace there are souls which start, and others which terminate their penance. The stressing of recurrent relationships and variants of the same symbol (arrow, bow, ship, water) throughout the cantos is rightly given great emphasis.

The "academic-poetic" questions asked, are always stimulating, even if vain, and hint at Singleton's remark that Dante's myth in contradistinction to Plato's myth is not free but directed by dogma. Or to say it with the Dante-Encyclical of Benedict XV: "Creations of fancy . . . turned . . . into an immortal tapestry of Catholic dogma." Thus Stambler discusses all the theories concerning the fate of Cato, "eternal" (?) guardian of *Antepurgatorio*, after doomsday. He raises the question why the siren appearing to Dante in his dream is an ugly and not a beautiful woman. I would say, because a woman whose body is not informed by a "cor gentil" cannot be beautiful for Dante. The beautiful body due to the "cor gentil," like Beatrice's allays desire (*Vita Nuova*) while the ugly body, if provoked, can still procure something to excite lust—like the song of the siren by which the process of "crystallization" (Stendhal) starts in the "lover," the dreaming Dante, without objectively changing anything of the siren's fundamental ugliness. The interpretation of Matelda as *Mater Ecclesia* is subtle but marred by Dante's allegedly amorous desire for her.

The many quotes from St. Thomas come from Father Gilby's and Professor Pegis' translations. Going to the Leonine text—helped by the Deferrari-Barry Lexicon—would have been more satisfactory and would have helped avoid some odd questions. Commentaries, more modern than the revamped Scartazzini—for instance, Momigliano—could have been

used with profit. Meaningless older and newer works (Aroux, Belperron, Farnell) could have been omitted and some important recent studies, particularly of Leo and Singleton, ought to have been given greater consideration. It is difficult today to distinguish between Platonism and Neoplatonism without recurring to Kristeller, between the problem Pope and Emperor without introducing the concepts of *mixtum imperium* and *Sacrum Imperium*. Too much is made out of Averroism, without ever mentioning the important *Libro de la Scala*. There are also, unfortunately, some remarks which, in their search for actuality, jeopardize the dignity of the book, e.g., "Put the 13th century scholar behind the wheel of the cadillac, and there you have some sort of equivalent for the modern reader dealing with allegory" (p. 77).

Stambler's refined study, very welcome as it is, elicits still one more consideration: the average agnostic and even Protestant interpreter (Spoerri) tries to reduce Dantes' "theological novel" (Croce) to moral proportions, insinuating that for such a genius as Dante the acceptance of a spiritual world existing besides and above the visible one was impossible even in the Middle Ages. Stambler (to-

gether with Leo, Singleton and all the more historically minded Dante scholars) takes at least for granted that Dante believed in the literal possibility of his poetic vision. Stambler may or may not regret the loss of this dimension for himself. But also he judges Dante from an alleged higher modern level and thinks Dante's *Purgatorio* could exist without redemption. Dr. Stambler certainly is no "critic engagé." None the less Stambler's criticism is more than art for art's sake and playful historicism bolstered up with all the modern brands of folklore (primitive culture, ritual, myth, Freudianism, Jungism and what not). Sometimes there seems to be a desperate quest for a higher truth though difficult to accept.

Be this as it may, the aesthetic approach of Mr. Stambler taken for what it is remains the asset of his commentary. He is the first to make something really positive out of the last cantos of the Earthly Paradise, often dismissed as a heavy allegory, while Stambler finds here—and I think he is right—"the orchestral marshalling of his (Dante's) themes in massive recapitulation and simultaneous development to a climax" (p. 250). (H. H.)

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

1.

Holy Pagans of the Old Testament. The new Helicon Press has followed up the publication of its attractive guides to the Christian art treasures of Europe (the first is on Lourdes and the Cathedrals of France, the second on Rome) with a brief but significant contribution to contemporary theological scholarship by the already-distinguished Father Jean Daniélou, S.J. CROSS CURRENTS readers should be especially grateful for HOLY PAGANS, for this study fills out the affirmation of scripture and tradition as to the sanctity of men who were outside the ambit of Judaeo-Christian revelation. The book studies the significance of the stories of Abel, Henoch, Danel, Noe, Job, Melchisedech, Lot, and the Queen of Saba.

The recurring concern over the sometimes-abused "No salvation outside the Church" will be enriched by Daniélou's contribution. "There is no salvation except through Christ. Thus there is no sanctity save in Christ. And as Christ forms one with the Church which is his Body, there is no salvation except in the Church. Nor is there any sanctity save through the Church." (p. 9). Those who never knew Christ and were saints, were sanctified not by a Buddha or a Mahomet but by Christ and his Church. Daniélou quotes the second-century statement of St. Justin: "All who have lived according to the Word, in Whom all men have part, are Christians, though they have passed for atheists, men such as Socrates, Heraclitus and others like them among the Greeks, and Abraham, Elias and many others amongst the bar-

barians" (*Apol.* I, 46, 2-5). He is not referring simply to the exercise of reason but to the action of grace. The fact is that "historically man pertains to a supernatural order... The cosmic religion is not a natural religion in the sense... of something outside the effective and concrete supernatural order" (p. 20).

Daniélou makes the notion of cosmic religion meaningful without lapsing into any pantheism or sentimentality. He presents its covenant as ratified by God's fidelity in sending us the rains and the fruitful seasons, which is "the basis of the pagan religions for which the recurrent seasons are the foundations of their worship." (p. 80). He thus is able to link up the great feasts of the Liturgical year, since they have "at the back of their Christian significance a Jewish significance; and behind this is a cosmic significance... Christian feasts bear some relation to those of all religions... for the religious feasts are bound up with the seasonal movements... That is the liturgical rendering of the cosmic revelation."

This message is particularly needed by urban (and suburban) modern Christians who have often little sense of the sacredness of ordinary things. We can hardly talk of "a new creation to someone who no longer recognizes that he is a creature.... What has to be restored... is the primary, original, universal basis of religion in the soul" (p. 132).

(J. E. C.)

(Notes by F. A. Walker, Joseph E. Cunneen, F. X. Quinn, Sally S. Cunneen, J. Cantatore, and Helmut Hatzfeld.)

A Point of View

Editors, contributors and readers alike appear to agree that what is most significant and important about *The Commonweal* is that it is an embodiment of a point of view. It is a conclusion reflected in quotations from, and references to, *The Commonweal* in various metropolitan newspapers and other mass media.

This viewpoint is most clearly manifest in *The Commonweal's* editorials each week on events and public issues. It also is developed, less directly perhaps, in a variety of articles on many subjects—social, cultural and political—by such typical contributors as: William V. Shannon, Christopher Dawson, H. A. Reinhold, Bede Griffiths, Francis E. McMahon, Thomas Molnar and Martin Turnell.

The Commonweal's approach is perhaps one further degree less obvious in its many literary articles and reviews of current books, movies and plays. But it is also implicit there. The magazine's varied content week by week adds up to an integral whole.

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have been loyal, patient and constructively critical, a constant reminder to busy editors of concrete meaning in many of the values for which we claim to be bringing out the magazine. Now, in an effort to provide better service—and to allow editors to edit, instead of spend their time losing file cards—we have opened a new subscription office at 3805 Dovedale Court, Randallstown, Maryland. This development will help the magazine—we should come out a little closer to on time—but unfortunately it will increase our expenses. Therefore we must ask all of you to take seriously the following suggestions of possible cooperation:

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